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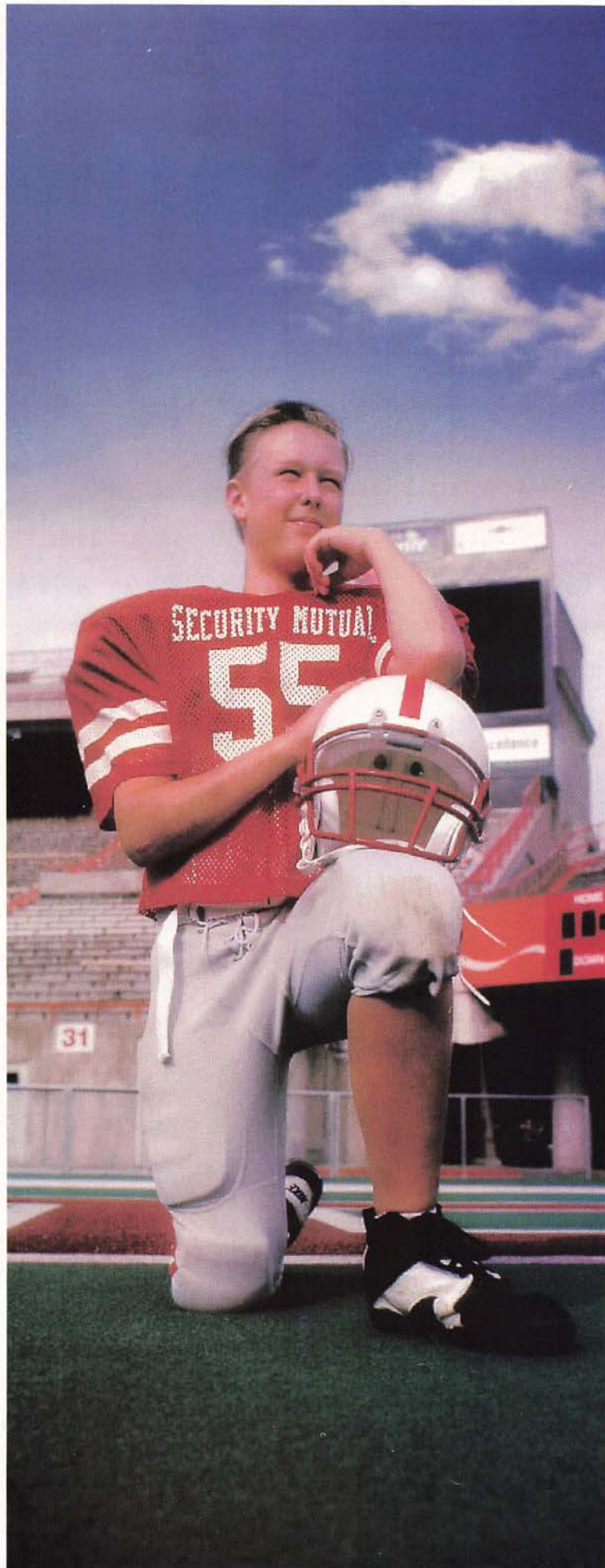
Volume 18, No. 11

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Triumphant Return As
Huskers Crush Doubters,
Huskies In 55-7 Win**

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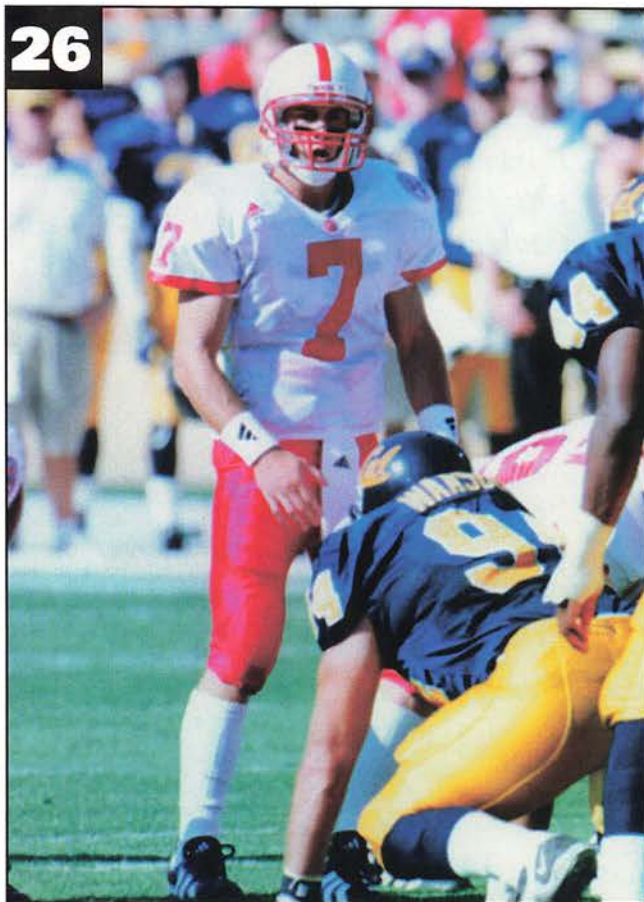
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26 Crouch Potato No More

He wishes the circumstances could have been different, but the injury to Bobby Newcombe has allowed Eric Crouch to show doubters that he's more than just a varsity sub.

By Mike Babcock

30 Super Sooners

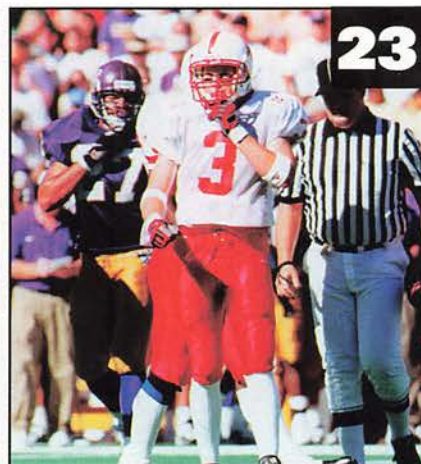
Until 1988, the Huskers didn't spend a lot of time looking in Oklahoma for talent, but players such as true freshman Jason Lohr prove the state shouldn't be ignored.

NEXT ISSUE

The review of the Big 12 Conference opener against Oklahoma State and a preview of Texas A&M will mail on Oct. 5.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Underused I-Backs

After the first three games, I am left wondering what happened to Nebraska's I-backs. I can't remember the last time Nebraska's I-backs had only 67 carries after three games. It seems Coach Solich has all but abandoned the I-backs except when running the option. I think Frank Solich is an excellent coach and offensive coordinator, but I miss seeing Nebraska's I-backs running right up the gut. I realize their offensive line is inexperienced, but I think they can still overpower most defenses they play. In any case, I am glad to see the Huskers much-improved production through the air and can't wait to watch them roll through the Big 12.

Jeremy Stein
Tempe, Ariz.

Huskers International

I have been living in Switzerland for over a year. While this is a great place to live and I have tried to adapt by playing soccer with a club in my village, I still miss Husker football. My subscription to *HI* helps me keep up with what's going on with the Big Red. Recently I tried to introduce my Swiss friends to Nebraska football. We watched a videotape of Nebraska's victory over Tennessee last January. We had a great time even though their interest waned at halftime. I'll just have to keep trying.

Tim Dungan
Prangins, Switzerland



Tim Dungan (standing, left) introduced NU football to Swiss friends Jolanda (standing) and (seated L-R) Fabienne, Christophe, Stephan and Virginie.

Second Opinion

TVV from NY ("Letters, Vol. 18, No., 9) is right on. The running game is the secret to the Cornhuskers' success. The offensive line will not be as dominant if

they are splitting their time between pass blocking and run blocking in any significant way. The ability that makes a great run blocker is not the same skill that creates a good pass blocker. The running game is so fundamental to Nebraska's history as a winning program that asking the line to become pass blockers may only serve to create a mediocre line.

HCR
Boise, Idaho

Armchair QBs

It is so disappointing to read about all the armchair coaches who feel they must second guess and complain about how the Huskers are playing. I believe the complaints about how the team isn't running as much as they used to or how the secondary struggled against LaTech are not constructive, nor do they show much of an understanding of the game of football.

Please remember that: 1) this is a young, inexperienced team that is working toward cohesiveness; 2) they've only played a few games together; 3) we have a lot of injuries keeping starters out; 4) we have a new head coach who may try some new looks. You need to go with whatever will be most effective against a given opponent. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Let's keep things in perspective. This is a team with a lot of talent and potential. It may come together this year or maybe next. I have faith that the coaches and kids do their best and are fully aware of what they need to do to improve. Nebraska football is unique. Nothing has convinced me of that more than having to tolerate the slanted coverage of Husker football in my area. This magazine is a lifeline.

Betsy Stuckey
Houston, Texas

Got Something To Say?

Please send your comments and questions to: Letters, P.O. Box 83222, Lincoln, Neb. 68501. Or fax them to us at (972) 851-1720. We reserve the right to edit the letters for clarity, content and length. For those with electronic mail abilities, huskersedit@sportscom.com.

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Random QUOTES

"He didn't come on the field in the brace, so we had to put him in the brace when he got on the field. He's not comfortable with wearing the brace."

"But we're comfortable with him wearing it. So he's going to wear it."

— **Frank Solich on Bobby Newcombe**, who must wear a brace because of the posterior cruciate ligament tear he suffered in the season opener

"My relationship with them is pretty good. We try to make sure that we make film available for them, and we let them come out to practice."

— **Solich on NFL scouts that were on campus during the Huskers' off-week**

"I don't think it's easy for a player not to know his status until just before the start of a game. It's not something we want to have happen. But in this case, it's almost a necessity."

— **Solich, on waiting to decide whether Newcombe or Eric Crouch would start the California game**

"I got my jersey and the name was spelled wrong on the back. They had spelled it 'ey' instead of 'ay.' All I knew is that I had a Nebraska jersey, and I didn't care if they had the wrong name on it."

— **Senior rush end Chad Kelsay, on his first action as a true freshman in 1995, at Oklahoma State**

"Sometimes if you're not careful, a player or a team can kind of just drift through the week and just get by. When that happens, you stop getting better as a football team. If you stop improving, that's when you're in trouble."

— **Solich on the dangers off an off-week during the season**

Call Control

Some call it crazy. Others call it imaginative. Regardless of public perception, Frank Solich calls it the way he sees it

Frank Solich wasted little time in showing he intended to do things his own way this season. That was apparent early in the second quarter of the 38-7 victory against Alabama-Birmingham.

Nebraska was facing a fourth-and-1 at the UAB 15-yard line, leading 7-0.

Instead of settling for an almost-certain field goal, Solich elected to go for the first down, and not only that, he elected to pass for the first down instead of run for it.

The result was a touchdown from **Eric Crouch** to **Sheldon Jackson**.

"We faked the 'iso' and ran the pass," Solich explained later. "That's always one of those deals where you either look pretty good or you look pretty bad. But it was worth the gamble at that point because of the fact that we had run the 'iso' in the first game out of that formation with that motion."

The Cornhuskers also had run the "iso" with motion earlier in the Alabama-Birmingham game.

So the pass play "was pretty well set up," Solich said.

Effective play-calling

requires imagination and foresight.

"But a lot of things can go wrong on that kind of thing," Solich said in answer to a reporter's question. "If they had really pressured us extensively, we wouldn't have got the pass off, and there would have been more than just this question about that call. There would have been a lot of questions about it."

"You just make those calls based on what you've done in the past, how other teams have reacted in the past in those kinds of situations, and you just play the odds a little bit. In my mind, it made sense to make that call and go forward with it."

"We faked the 'iso' and ran the pass. That's always one of those deals where you either look pretty good or you look pretty bad."

— **Frank Solich, describing a second quarter touchdown-scoring play against Alabama-Birmingham**

It was not necessarily a smart call, a great call. It wouldn't have been a ridiculous call or bad call if it wouldn't have worked. It was just a call that had a chance."

Solich, like his predecessor **Tom Osborne**, also understands the importance of repetition in practice. And again, the Alabama-Birmingham game provided some significant evidence.

With 3:34 remaining in the first half, Nebraska began a series at its own 30-yard line, leading 14-7. Twelve plays later, the Cornhuskers scored a touchdown on an 11-yard run by Crouch.

Only nine seconds were left on the clock when Crouch crossed the goal line.

"We practice a great deal on the two-minute drill, on making sure we're very composed in what we're doing going down to the last few seconds of a half, the last few seconds of a game, so our players were ready to respond to that kind of a situation," Solich said the next week.

"We've practiced hard on that already this fall."

Even though time was of the essence, Solich said "we had enough time to operate what we were



doing. We were out of that formation on several calls in the first half and their alignment never varied."

Again, it was a matter of tendencies.

"There was no question that the last call, the sprint option out of that formation in my mind, was going to be there unless they all of a sudden did something different than they had done the entire half without having time to really organize anything different.

"So we felt that was there, and it was worth the call.

"But if you get tackled on the call and you're slow getting up and you don't get another play off, it really looks kind of like ridiculous call. But it's a call that had a chance, and it worked out this time. With that situation and all those facts, I would have made that same call again.

"It's fun when it works. I can tell you that." ■

Netters Skin Gators For Tourney Title

THE NO. 3-RANKED Nebraska volleyball team pounded No. 10-ranked Florida, 15-4, 15-8, 15-0 to win the US Bank Tournament in the Nebraska Coliseum in front of over 4,000 fans on Sept. 19.

The Huskers did little wrong as **Terry Pettit's** squad held the Gators to 12 total points in the match, including a scoreless third game. NU's offense posted one of its most dominating performance of the season as the Huskers hit .459 while holding Florida to a .011 hitting percentage.

"We did a good job," Pettit said. "I thought we played really well. We're a very good serving and passing team, and that enables us to follow a game plan."

The Huskers got off to a strong start as NU's blockers shut down the Gator offense by recording six blocks in the first frame. Florida managed only four points and six sideouts in the first game.

The Gators scratched their way to a 6-4 lead in the second game, but the Huskers regained the lead at 7-5 after a **Nancy Meendering** kill. Clinging to a 9-6 lead, junior **Denise Koziol** broke the match open with a service ace to give the Huskers a 10-6 lead.

"We're pretty much even (when Koziol entered the game), and Koziol comes in and rips that ball and aces a good passer," Pettit said. "It just said, 'It doesn't make any difference what the matchup is, we are going after it.'"

Nebraska never looked back, scoring five straight points to end the second game.

Florida never found its rhythm in the final game. Husker sophomore **Angie Oxley** served the first nine points for the Huskers as the Gators managed just three kills and four sideouts in the third game. Nebraska was perfect at the net, posting eight kills on 12 attacks with no errors for a .667 hitting percentage.

With the win, Nebraska extended its win streak to 51 in the Coliseum. The Huskers have won 21 straight regular-season matches dating back to last year.

Meendering finished with a match-high 13 kills on 19 attacks to lead the Huskers. Senior Megan Korver added seven kills for the Huskers. Senior setter **Fiona Nepo** earned tournament MVP honors after recording 26 assists, nine digs and three kills in the championship match. ■



Fiona NEPO



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BIG 12 NEWS

Notes And Quotes From Around The League

CLASSLESS IN COLUMBIA

Don't look for the Kansas band to make a return trip to Columbia, Mo., anytime soon. When the band took the field during the Missouri game (which Kansas lost, 41-23), members were pelted with objects ranging from liquor bottles to golf balls.

"They don't want to go back," KU band director **Robert Foster** said. "None of these kids have been treated this badly anywhere before, and they don't like it."

KU coach **Terry Allen** said the rough treatment by Mizzou fans wasn't limited to band members.

"They were pretty abusive to our people," he said. "Not toward our football team, but to our parents and band members. We've got some people in the hospital."

Missouri Chancellor **Richard Wallace** said: "We do not condone any form of disrespect for guests on our campus, and we expect all members of the MU community to take responsibility for their behavior."

TALKING SMACK

Nebraska won the battle with California, 24-3, but that didn't stop several Cal players from starting a war of words after the game.

"We were wearing them down. You could see in their eyes that they were afraid of us," Cal linebacker **Albert Dorsey** said. "At first they wouldn't talk to us, but by the second half, they began talking to us like they wanted to be our friends."

Cal safety **Marquis Smith** said Nebraska's offense "didn't outmuscle us. I thought they were going to be playing a lot harder. It wasn't something that I expected from a defending national championship team."

Cal quarterback **Justin Vedder** said he wasn't impressed with the Cornhuskers' defense. "It would be hard for me to believe that team will win the national championship. If they win the national championship, we've got a great opportunity. We're going to be pretty good."

California is scheduled to play at Nebraska next season. Dorsey, Smith and Vedder won't be there, however. All three are seniors.

TV LORDS DOMINATE

Less than a month remains before the Oklahoma State-Nebraska game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., on Oct. 3. Incredible as it may seem to the thousand of fans spending the cash to make the trip, nobody knows when the sold-out contest will start.

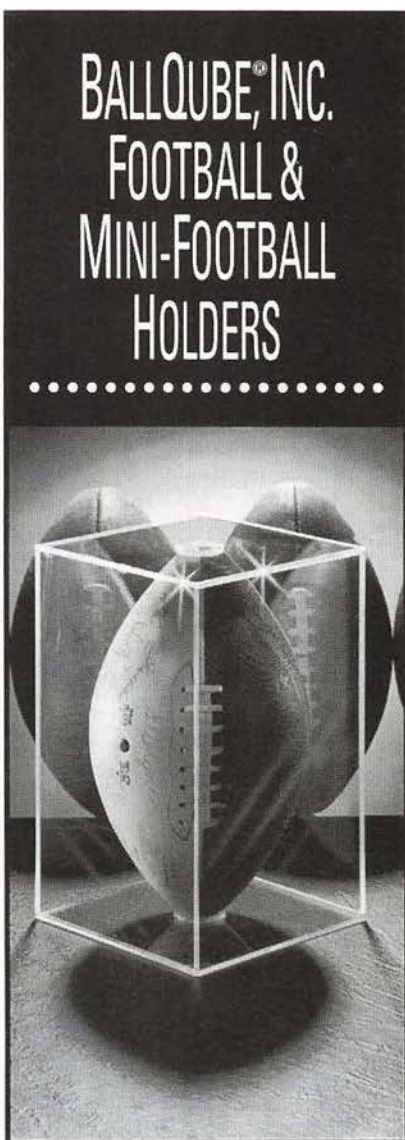
Blame it on television. Money talks and those TV boys with the deep pockets have the power to talk and walk over fans and everyone else. The league allows ABC to wait until six days before a game to make a decision on its selection for that weekend. Best bet at the moment is that the game will kick off either at 11:30 a.m., or 2:30 p.m. Stay tuned.

SHORT SHOTS

- Iowa State coach **Dan McCarney** kept his promise and had his hair dyed gold three days after the Cyclones upset Iowa, 27-9. "Two of my defensive backs dyed their hair gold. They told me, 'Coach, we win this game, you've got to dye your hair.' I said, 'I'll dye it any color if we beat Iowa.' So I did it and walked into the (team) meeting and everybody went crazy. Fortunately, my wife went to the beauty shop and found some gold hair spray, and it comes out with six shampoos."
- McCarney hopes the win over the Hawkeyes helps Iowa State's efforts to recruit in-state talent. "We've made a real commitment to recruit Iowa kids, and it's been extremely hard to get top kids in this state to say no to Iowa and come to Iowa State. There have been a few, but not near as many as I would like."
- Colorado's players weren't happy to see more than 9,000 empty seats for the Buffs' home opener against Fresno State. "You come out for warm-ups and there's nobody there," CU cornerback **Ben Kelly** said. "We want to have a packed house. But what can you do? You can't go on the street and recruit fans."
- Kansas State kicker **Martin Gramatica** set an NCAA record with a 65-yard field goal against Northern Illinois. "Two days prior to that, he hit the crossbar from 72 yards (in practice)," K-State coach **Bill Snyder** said. "His range is in the 70-yard range." — **By Dave Sittler**



Two days prior to setting an NCAA record with a 65-yard field goal, KSU's Martin Gramatica hit the crossbar from 72 yards in practice.



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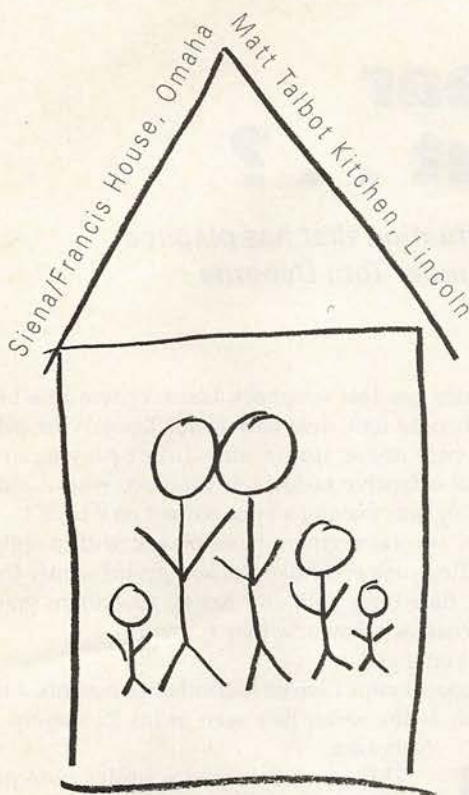
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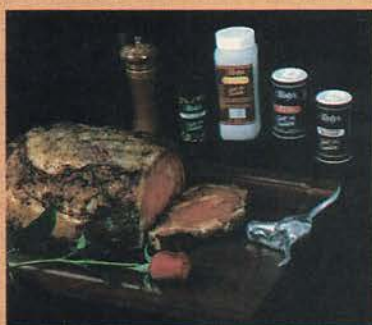
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Did You Hear The One About . . . ?

It's a joke that some would suggest the injury situation that has plagued this year's team wouldn't have happened under Tom Osborne



**Mike
BABCOCK**

THE HOST OF A sports talk show recently felt compelled to raise the question on behalf of "some people" who were suggesting that if Tom Osborne were still Nebraska's coach, the Cornhuskers wouldn't have been beset with injuries the way they were earlier this season — and, perhaps, still are.

The pre-print demands of this magazine are such that Nebraska will have practiced for more than a week and played another game before the finished product rolls off the presses.

So a lot can happen to affect the health of the Cornhuskers. And the way things have gone so far, the effect is more likely than not to be negative, but even if it is, it won't be Solich's fault.

Some aspects of the program — most too subtle to notice — have changed under his direction. But the players have not become more injury-prone since Osborne stepped aside.

Such a suggestion is laughable, even if the subject is not. Nebraska has had to contend with a significant number of injuries to key players in the early going, beginning with the torn knee cartilage suffered by sophomore I-back DeAngelo Evans in the first major scrimmage of fall camp.

Evans underwent arthroscopic surgery a week later and wasn't able to return to practice until the week after the California game. The hope was that he'd be able to return against Washington.

The same was true of sophomore Clint Finley, who was the projected starter at free safety until he was sidelined by a strained knee ligament during preseason practice. Finley worked hard at rehabilitation and also returned to practice following the California game, but he didn't make it through his first one.

Sophomore quarterback Bobby Newcombe started the opener and was healthy well into the second half before suffering a tear in the posterior cruciate ligament of his left knee, an injury that kept him out of two games and provided redshirt freshman Eric Crouch with an unexpected opportunity.

Crouch didn't finish the second game because of a hamstring problem, which meant Solich had to turn to senior Monte Christo, who began the season as the third quarterback on the depth chart. Christo finished, even though someone stepped on his right thumb, which has undergone

surgery twice.

Nebraska also has lost wingback Lance Brown to a broken bone in his right foot, defensive tackle Jason Wiltz, who suffered a severe ankle sprain and didn't play against California, and offensive tackle Jeff Clausen, who is sidelined indefinitely after having a knee scoped on Aug. 27.

In addition, several regulars have played with nagging injuries, including rush end Mike Rucker (groin), center Josh Heskeew (back flare-ups), split end Kenny Cheatham (hamstring) and cornerback Erwin Swiney (groin).

And on and on it goes.

Defensive coordinator Charlie McBride has described the injury situation as the worst he's seen in his 22 seasons at Nebraska.

This season's injuries underscore just how fortunate Nebraska has been in recent seasons.

A year ago, the Cornhuskers were relatively free of significant injuries, not counting the fact Evans had to take a medical redshirt because of a pelvic problem that sidelined him for 16 months.

Defensively, free safety Eric Warfield and weakside linebacker Octavious McFarlin each missed one start because of injuries. Tackle Jason Peter was limited by back spasms in a couple of games and Rucker had the groin problem early. Otherwise, the Blackshirts remained intact.

Offensively, Cheatham was the only regular who missed more than one game because of an injury. He missed two. And the interior line starters were together from beginning to end.

The offensive line didn't lose a starter to injury in any of the last four seasons, in fact.

The most significant injury problems Nebraska faced in Osborne's final five seasons occurred in 1994, when quarterback Tommie Frazier was sidelined by a blood clot problem and rover Mike Minter was lost for the season after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament in the second game.

Frazier's replacement, the late Brook Berringer, suffered a partially collapsed lung and missed one start, being replaced by walk-on Matt Turman in the Kansas State game, a situation comparable, in a limited sense, to Christo's replacing Crouch in the California game.

"It's good how the players are approaching this thing," Solich said. It's also good how Solich is dealing with the problem, making adjustments as best he can. And though it shouldn't need saying again, the injuries are not his fault.

Please repeat after me . . . ■



Lance Brown is one of many injured starters who has been forced to watch games from the sidelines this season.



Husker Season Pass



- **General admission to every sport listed on the right**
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- **\$100 per adult, or**
- **\$50 per student (17 and under)**

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Baseball
Women's Basketball
Men's Basketball
(non-conference)
Men's Gymnastics
Women's Gymnastics
Men's Track & Field
Women's Track & Field
Men's Cross Country
Women's Cross Country
Men's Swimming Women's
Swimming Men's Diving
Women's Diving
Men's Tennis
Women's Tennis
Men's Golf
Women's Golf
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Bowling
Rifle

Call 800-8BIGRED for more information.

After The Game Is When The 'Fun' Begins

*There's no time to celebrate victories (or mourn losses) for those who bring
Husker fans news after time expires*



**BILL
DOLEMAN**

IN THE SPRING of 1995, I received a phone call I'll never forget. It was a little after 7 a.m., and the voice on the other end of the line said, in a businesslike manner, "Hi, Bill, this is Tom Osborne."

In a deep, groggy voice, which was as close to Barry White's as I'll ever get, I said, "Fine, Coach, how are you?" He asked me if he had woken me. Of course he had, and of course I said: "Oh no, I've been up for a while." As if I were just getting ready for lunch or something.

Now, anyone who knows me knows that if I'm up before 9 a.m., God has worked a minor miracle. So I had just told a little white lie to Tom Osborne, of all people.

And where did it get me? He asked me to come in for a meeting. "I'd like to talk to you about a few things we're going to be doing down here. Is eight o'clock all right?"

My thought process went something like: "Let's see, shower, get dressed, get out of here, get downtown, find a parking place and get to his office, all in 45 minutes." Impossible.

So I said, "Sure, no problem, Coach."

That day I met with Coach, former associate athletic director Steve Pederson and Jeff Schmahl, now the director of HuskerVision. The meeting was to discuss a new Tom Osborne pre-game show, which we would call "The Kickoff Show," and would I be interested in hosting it?

Now, my thought process was something like, "Let's see, the opportunity of a lifetime. Don't pass it up." I didn't. Thus began my association with HuskerVision, which is now in its fourth year.

And trust me, there have been some memorable moments along the way. Big games, national championships and meeting great people top the list, but sometimes, just simply getting our shows produced and on the air can be an unforgettable process.

Take Nebraska's Sept. 12 game at Cal, for example.

First, I must say that over the last couple of years that I have hosted both Osborne's and now Frank Solich's highlight shows, the most often asked question has been a simple one: "So when do you tape the show?" The answer depends upon the end of the game or when we get back to town.

For home games, the goal is three hours after the final seconds tick away.

Road games, however, are different. Like the Cal game, most are on television somewhere, so someone is back at the HuskerVision control room, recording the game. In this case, it was director Kirk Hartman and Mike Hodges, a do-it-all freelancer who, by the way, is the cameraman who shoots the Tunnel Walk. In addition to writing the show's script, my main duty is to select the plays that will be replayed on "The Frank Solich Show." The list is faxed back to Lincoln after each quarter and the editing of the television feed begins while the game is being played. So by the time we get back to Lincoln, the time between landing and taping could take less than an hour.

Putting together the finished product, however, can take forever.

After the Cal game, which ended at 9:17 p.m. CDT, we touched down in Lincoln at 2:13 a.m. While everyone else headed for home, HuskerVision had a full crew of staff and students waiting to go to work. The open rolled at 3:27 a.m. and an hour and one minute later, we were done taping the show.

Meanwhile, the work in the control room was far from over. Jeff, Kirk and Mike then re-edited the footage, replacing the TV highlights with those shot by HuskerVision's cameras at the game.

That near two-hour process was followed by another two-hour process called post-production editing, which includes putting in graphics, replays and fixing any technical glitches.

Once that was done, it took another hour for a group of students, who call themselves "Nocturnal Video Reproduction

Specialists," to dub the finished product for the affiliates. There was, however, one extra challenge. KMTV in Omaha airs the show at 10, therefore 8:30 a.m. is the deadline.

That meant five hours of work had to be crammed into four — all in the wee hours of the morning. Not an easy task by any means, but the mission was accomplished.

It was a workday that began early in Berkeley, Calif., and ended much later in Lincoln. As I recall, no one said anything about those kinds of hours at that first meeting back in 1995. But if you ask me, or anyone on HuskerVision's late-night crew, we'll tell you: "Hey, it's a great job, but somebody's got to do it." ■



The Cal game caused deadline and production headaches for many media members including the crew at HuskerVision.

Bill Doleman's face is familiar to Cornhusker fans. He is host for several Nebraska-related television programs including the "Husker Show" and coaches' shows for Terry Pettit, Paul Sanderford and Frank Solich.

Don't Count Christo Out

The football gods have served up more than enough hard knocks to discourage the average player, but not walk-on quarterback Monte Christo



Curt McKEEVER

IT SEEMED CRUEL. The first series of his final season ended when he fumbled the ball away to Alabama-Birmingham.

When he finally threw his first pass as a Cornhusker on the next drive, it went for all of one yard.

Monte Christo didn't even get to finish off that drive because Eric Crouch had returned from the locker room, having been replenished by intravenous fluids.

It was like the football gods were taking one last shot at Christo, telling him in a voice that only he could hear, "Sorry, kid. Nothing personal, but this game can be cruel. Don't let it get you too down."

No doubt, Christo had heard the voice before.

It showed up after he had arrived on campus in 1994. After impressing Nebraska coaches enough to make the travel roster for the Kickoff Classic, Christo tore ligaments in his right thumb and had to have surgery. He returned to practice in October thinking he would finish out a redshirt season running the scout team.

Then came insult to injury. In the eighth game at Missouri, Christo, on the trip only as insurance, found himself running out the clock of a 42-7 rout when backup Matt Turman was injured. It was the only action he would see all season.

The following spring, Christo had a disc removed from his back. He endured and was ready to resume practicing in the fall, but on the first day of contact tore the anterior cruciate ligament in a knee.

During the spring of 1996, newcomer safety Clint Finley welcomed Christo back from his medical redshirt season by leveling him with a hit that gave him a concussion.

Christo forged ahead, but saw limited action in five games in each his sophomore and junior seasons. Last fall, he also suffered a cracked vertebrae and had to sit out the opener.

It was nothing compared to the knockout punch the voice tried to deliver last spring. Christo had worked his way up to tie Bobby Newcombe for No. 2 on the depth chart behind Frankie London when he fell during an April practice and reinjured his thumb. This time, doctors had to use a tendon from his forearm to repair the damage.

"It crossed my mind to quit. I was pretty down," Christo

said earlier this fall. "Then I started thinking about all the time and work I've put in here the last four years, and I realized I am not a quitter.

"This is a game I love. I'm going to have a blast as a senior, and nothing is going to stop me."

Not a fumble on his first series. And certainly not a uneventful one-yard completion.

And you know what? The next time Christo got a play off against Alabama-Birmingham, he completed a 63-yard touchdown pass to freshman tight end Tracey Wistrom.

"I know my role on this team," he said afterwards. "But now the coaches know I can get the job done."

Christo probably has the best grasp of the Nebraska offense of all the quarterbacks and before the opener said he would pass down that knowledge to the sophomore Newcombe and redshirt freshman Crouch.

"They have a great amount of talent and they are blessed with that edge that makes them very special to this team," he said, adding, "I feel like I could step in and help any time. Around here, you learn that if you are No. 3, you have to be as ready as No. 1 and No. 2."

That prophecy turned into reality when he was asked to protect a 14-3 lead on the road at Cal when Crouch's hamstring tightened up midway through the third quarter. Christo responded by completing 9-of-12 passes for 106 yards and a touchdown. He even rushed 13 times for 32 yards.

But considering Newcombe and Crouch are on the mend, Christo's time in the spotlight has likely come and gone. But he wouldn't trade it for anything.

"Even if I wouldn't have played, this was a great opportunity to be part of this

team," Christo said, "just to be a Nebraska football player."

If you're human, you can't help but applaud.

"What Monte has done gives everybody an example about life and perseverance and not giving up," NU quarterbacks coach Turner Gill told the *Omaha World-Herald*. "We all go through things in life. Monte, in a five-year period here, has gone through some unfortunate things. To see him stay with it and not give up says a lot about what kind of person he is." ■



Following the Cal game, Christo was the Big 12's passing efficiency leader after completing 13-of-16 for 187 yards and two touchdowns.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

Cowboys Try To Corral Nebraska

Oklahoma State hopes to figure out how to snap 22-year winless streak against Cornhuskers

By Mark DEROWITSCH

Oklahoma State Coach Bob Simmons figured he wouldn't learn much during the Cowboys bye week.

Simmons planned to spend his free Saturday afternoon sitting in front of the television watching Nebraska, Oklahoma State's next opponent, play against Washington. He didn't think he'd have any new ideas about how to play the Cornhuskers after the telecast, though.

"I don't think they've changed much," Simmons said. "They always have a strong defense. Offensively,

they have a great quarterback, an offensive line that just challenges you and some pretty good backs. I don't think they've changed much.

"I expect Nebraska to be Nebraska."

That could mean bad news is in store for the Cowboys.

Oklahoma State hasn't beaten Nebraska since 1961, when the Cowboys claimed a 14-6 victory at home. Since then, the Huskers have won 33 of the last 34 games in the series, and their only blemish on an otherwise perfect slate against Oklahoma State is a 17-17 tie back in 1973.

After that tie, Nebraska has gone on to reel off 22 consecutive wins against OSU, and in 1995, the only time the Cowboys have faced Nebraska with Simmons as their coach, the Huskers posted a 64-21 victory.

Since the Cowboys can't seem to beat Nebraska at home in Stillwater or in Lincoln, they hope a change of scenery will help. Officials at the school decided to move the game to Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., for the Oct. 3 game, which will begin at 6 p.m. and will be televised regionally by Fox Sports Net.

This might be as good a time as any for the Cowboys to try to end their futile streak against the Huskers. Oklahoma State rebounded from an embarrassing loss to Tulsa to beat Mississippi State, 35-20, in its home opener. The Bulldogs were ranked 25th by the *Associated Press* coming into the contest.

It took the Cowboys' best offensive show in more than a decade to upset Mississippi State. Oklahoma State racked up 561 yards of total offense, 360 of which came on the ground against a defense that had been allow-

ing less than 72 yards per contest.

The main reason for the Cowboys' strong showing against Mississippi State was the play of sophomore quarterback Tony Lindsay. Lindsay threw for 201 yards and ran for two touchdowns.

For Lindsay, who had a sub-par game in the loss to Tulsa, it was simply a matter of doing more with less. Simmons said he pared down the OSU

NEBRASKA
(4-0)

@ OKLAHOMA STATE
(2-1)



Joe WALKER



Tony LINDSAY

October 3, 1998 • 6:00 p.m. (CST)
Arrowhead Stadium • Kansas City, Mo.

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE 6	Kenny Cheatham***	6-4	210	Sr.
3	Matt Davison*	6-0	180	So.
LT 69	Adam Julch**	6-5	315	Jr.
72	Ben Gessford*	6-2	290	Sr.
LG 63	James Sherman**	6-2	295	Jr.
54	Dominic Raiola	6-2	300	Fr.
C 59	Josh Heskew***	6-3	290	Fr.
54	Dominic Raiola	6-2	300	Fr.
RG 72	Ben Gessford*	6-2	290	So.
55	Russ Hochstein*	6-3	280	So.
RT 65	Jason Schwab*	6-1	300	Jr.
58	Dave Volk	6-4	280	Fr.
TE 88	Sheldon Jackson***	6-4	245	Sr.
85	T.J. DeBates**	6-3	250	Jr.
QB 12	Bobby Newcombe*	6-0	195	So.
7	Eric Crouch	6-0	200	Fr.
FB 45	Joel Makovicka***	5-11	240	Sr.
15	Willie Miller*	6-0	230	So.
IB 4	DeAngelo Evans*	5-9	210	So.
36	Correll Buckhalter*	6-0	225	So.
WB 5	Shevin Wiggins**	5-11	200	Sr.
1	Frankie London**	6-0	180	Jr.
PK 14	Kris Brown***	5-10	205	Sr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR 57	Chad Kelsay***	6-3	250	Sr.
83	Kyle Vanden Bosch*	6-4	260	So.
NT 96	Steve Warren**	6-1	305	Jr.
70	Jason Lohr	6-3	275	Fr.
DT 91	Loran Kaiser*	6-5	280	So.
90	Jeremy Slechta	6-5	255	Fr.
RR 84	Mike Rucker***	6-6	250	Sr.
81	Aaron Wills	6-2	240	Jr.
SLB 46	Brian Shaw**	6-1	215	Jr.
-or- 37	Tony Ortiz	6-0	215	Jr.
MLB 44	Jay Foreman***	6-1	240	So.
13	Carlos Polk*	6-3	245	Sr.
WLB 1	Eric Johnson**	6-1	205	Sr.
50	Julius Jackson**	6-0	235	Jr.
LCB 16	Erwin Swiney*	6-0	185	So.
3	Keyuo Craver	6-0	180	Fr.
FS 21	Mike Brown**	5-10	205	Jr.
14	Dion Booker	6-1	205	Fr.
ROV 25	Joe Walker*	5-10	200	So.
29	Gregg List**	6-0	220	Jr.
RCB 22	Ralph Brown**	5-9	180	Jr.
11	Jerome Peterson**	5-7	185	Jr.
P 23	Bill Lafleur***	5-11	200	Sr.

Tentative 2 Deeps

OKLAHOMA STATE DEFENSE

DE 42	Andre Waddle	6-2	240	Sr.
49	Tanner Bruce	6-4	250	Fr.
DT 92	Cortney Malloy	6-1	290	Jr.
96	Eric Stevenson	6-4	280	Jr.
DT 95	Alton Weaver	6-4	275	Sr.
-or- 90	Zac Akin	6-4	240	So.
DE 66	Taber LeBlanc	6-2	260	Sr.
97	Zak Warner	6-4	240	So.
SLB 37	Justin Thomas	6-3	240	So.
47	Dwayne Levels	6-3	220	Fr.
MLB 7	Kenyatta Wright	6-1	235	Jr.
57	Clint Metcalf	6-3	225	Sr.
WLB 32	Tarrell Knauls	6-1	230	Jr.
6	Troy West	6-4	205	Jr.
LCB 25	J.B. Flowers	6-0	185	Jr.
5	Adam Edwards	6-0	215	Jr.
SS 10	Trent Alexander	6-0	195	Sr.
41	Robbie Gillem	6-1	200	Fr.
FS 9	Ricky Thompson	6-1	180	Sr.
29	Chris Carter	6-3	215	Jr.
RCB 28	Evan Howell	6-1	175	Jr.
15	Marcus Jones	5-9	175	Fr.
P 81	Scott Elder	6-3	195	Fr.

OKLAHOMA STATE OFFENSE

WR 80	Willie Grissom	5-11	190	Sr.
12	Cameron White	6-4	180	Jr.
LT 75	David Camacho	6-7	300	Sr.
73	Josh Lind	6-6	280	So.
LG 78	Adam Davis	6-4	275	Jr.
60	Reynell Lavigne	6-1	285	Jr.
C 70	Jeremy Offutt	6-5	295	Sr.
60	Reynell Lavigne	6-1	285	Jr.
RG 79	Jorge Arceo	6-5	300	Sr.
64	Jeff Machado	6-3	275	Fr.
RT 77	A. Golembiewski	6-5	290	Jr.
69	Brian Phillips	6-5	285	Fr.
TE 86	Garrett Steggs	6-3	235	Jr.
88	Sean Barry	6-4	235	So.
WR 4	Sean Love	5-9	180	Sr.
3	Terrance Richardson	5-9	180	Sr.
QB 10	Tony Lindsay	6-2	190	So.
8	Chris Chaloupka	6-2	220	Jr.
FB 48	Jeremy Halferty	6-0	225	Jr.
-or- 45	Brian Aikins	6-1	245	Sr.
TB 1	Nathan Simmons	5-10	200	Jr.
-or- 2	Jamaal Fobbs	5-10	180	So.
K 14	Tim Sydes	6-2	195	Jr.

playbook in order to give his quarterback more confidence.

"We cut back on some of the things we do," Simmons said. "I think really what happened is that other players stepped up and took some of the pressure off Tony Lindsay. When we run the ball like we did against Mississippi State, it takes a lot of pressure off the quarterback."

Tailbacks Nathan Simmons, the son of coach Bob Simmons, and Jamaal Fobbs have combined to give the Cowboys a respectable 1-2 punch behind Lindsay. Nathan Simmons leads the team in rushing with 239 yards after three games, but Fobbs

isn't far behind with 210 yards on the ground. Lindsay has contributed another 171 yards in the Cowboys' running attack.

The Cowboys have a solid passing attack, too. Lindsay and backup Chris Chaloupka have combined to throw for 545 yards this season, or about 181 yards per game.

It was Lindsay's performance against Mississippi State that stood out, and maybe turned the Cowboys season around.

"It was a defining moment for us," Simmons said.

It was a pretty good afternoon for the OSU defense, too.

Mississippi State gained 360 yards of offense, and the Cowboys held the Bulldogs' leading rusher to just 38 yards on the ground.

After three games, Oklahoma State is holding opponents to just 105.7 rushing yards per game, but the secondary is giving up more than 200 yards through the air.

It's tough to run against the Cowboys because of the strength of their front seven defenders.

Linebacker Kenyatta Wright leads the team in tackles with 18, tackles for losses with five and sacks with three. Weakside linebacker Troy West also has three sacks and four other tackles behind the line of scrimmage. West has also intercepted two passes this season.

Oklahoma State, which moved the game against Nebraska to Kansas City in order to generate more revenue for its athletic department, doesn't get a break after facing the Huskers. After the Nebraska game, the Cowboys face Texas Tech, Texas A&M and Kansas State. That means in a six week span, Oklahoma State will have faced five teams that had a combined record of 57-15 a year ago.

"This idle week really helps us," Simmons said last week. "It gives us a chance to look at what we've done and gives us a pretty good idea of what we need to work on." ■

TALE OF THE TAPE

Who Has The Edge?

QUARTERBACKS

OSU's Tony Lindsay is up and down. With Bobby Newcombe finally semi-healthy, it looks like Nebraska's musical game of quarterbacks is over. Even if Newcombe isn't at full strength, Eric Crouch has shown he can do the job.



RUNNING BACKS

A healthy DeAngelo Evans is better than any two running backs OSU has. Fobbs and Simmons are tough runners for OSU, but when you throw in Makovicka, Buckhalter and Co., the Huskers have a serious arsenal.



RECEIVERS

OSU's receivers can catch the ball. Can they block like the Huskers? No way. Both teams look to their receivers for the big play and the Cornhuskers have too much depth in this department.



OFFENSIVE LINE

The OSU offensive front will determine if the Cowboys are left out of the Husker stampede. Nebraska's offensive line has stood tall in the face of injuries and should be ready to go for the Big 12 opener.



DEFENSIVE LINE

The Cowboys have been tough against the run against the likes of Kansas, Tulsa and Mississippi State. They'll get a chance to prove their worth against a very strong Nebraska offense.



LINEBACKERS

OSU's Kenyatta Wright is one of the nation's best. The rest of the Cowboy 'backers aren't too shabby, either. The Cornhuskers are strong, but Wright can single-handedly make a difference in any game.



SECONDARY

The numbers are deceiving. Nebraska is solid. Joe Walker is growing into a multi-dimensional threat and the defensive backs have stepped it up a notch since taking one on the chin against Louisiana Tech.



SPECIAL TEAMS

Tim Sydnies has hit just 1-of-4 field goal attempts this year. Kris Brown may not have three misses all year. The aforementioned Joe Walker is one of the top return men in the nation.



Kenyatta Wright, who is the key cog in the Oklahoma State defense, will be counted upon to help stop Nebraska's powerful running game.

QB TONY LINDSAY VS NU SECONDARY KEY MATCHUP

Lindsay, the 1997 Big 12 Conference Freshman of the Year, is a big-play quarterback. He helped Oklahoma State bounce back after a terrible loss to Tulsa by throwing for 201 yards in an upset of Mississippi State.

The Husker secondary has made a reputation for itself the past few years by reducing highly touted quarterbacks into meat. If the Cowboys have any thoughts of an upset, it will rest on the arm of Lindsay.

Lindsay is a run-first, pass-second quarterback. He is incredibly effective at using the run to set up the deep ball downfield. The Nebraska defensive backs will have to be careful not to bite on his play fakes.

If Lindsay can be contained in the pocket, it will greatly reduce his effectiveness. He is most dangerous when he gets outside of the tackles and he throws well off the run. If he can be held to under 150 yards passing, Nebraska should have an advantage.

If Nebraska jumps out in front early, look for OSU to throw often, allowing the Cornhusker defensive backs to gamble and make some big plays. ■

Bobby Newcombe wasted no time in showing there were no significant lingering effects of the tear in his left posterior cruciate ligament, an injury that sidelined him for two games.

The sophomore quarterback ran 24 yards on the first play from scrimmage against Washington. All but three yards of the run were nullified by a holding penalty, but Newcombe came back two plays later and scrambled for 13 yards on a third-and-11 from his own 17-yard line.

That was a key play in an 82-yard, 17-play touchdown drive, capped by Newcombe's 3-yard run.

He would go on to score two more touchdowns before giving way to Monte Christo.

Welcome back Newcombe. Welcome back DeAngelo Evans.

And welcome back running game.

"It was our intention to try to build some confidence in our running game, to run it at them some and then mix things in," said Cornhusker coach Frank Solich.

Nebraska ran it at the Huskies more than "some" — 68 times to be exact, for a total rushing net of 434 yards.

"I think our goal was to make a statement," said Cornhusker center Josh Heske. "We've been criticized enough, whether it's the offensive line or running back, whatever. We played the eighth-ranked team, and we came out and played some good ball. Hopefully, this will answer some of the questions people have about our team."

Oh yes, the final score was 55-7. And the game was watched not only by a regional television audience on ABC but also by sports writers from across the nation.

So many national writers came to Lincoln that front row seats in the pressbox were at a premium and post-game interviews were moved to the more spacious South Stadium varsity lounge.

What those writers saw was Nebraska score on five of its first six possessions and take a 35-7 lead to the lockerroom at halftime against a Washington team ranked No. 9 nationally.

Evans, who was playing for the first time since the Big 12 championship game against Texas in 1996, started at I-back and rushed for 146 yards and three touchdowns on only 13 carries. On the fourth of those 13 carries, he ran 60 yards to score.

According to Solich, there was no message beyond the victory,

"I imagine everybody will look at it kind of like I do, that our team played very well, that we're 4-0, and all we can do is go forward from here," he said. "The moment you start thinking you're pretty good, that's when you start to take steps backward. I think we have a team that's capable of doing a lot of things and doing them well. We showed signs of that today, but we'll keep working."

As noted earlier, what the Cornhuskers did well offensively was run the ball. And what they did particularly well defensively was pressure Washington quarterback Brock Huard.

"He's not the kind of quarterback who's going to sit there in the pocket and feel comfortable when he's got a lot of bodies flying around all over the place," Nebraska rush end Chad Kelsay said.

"We saw that on film from last year. And we saw it on film from the early games this year.

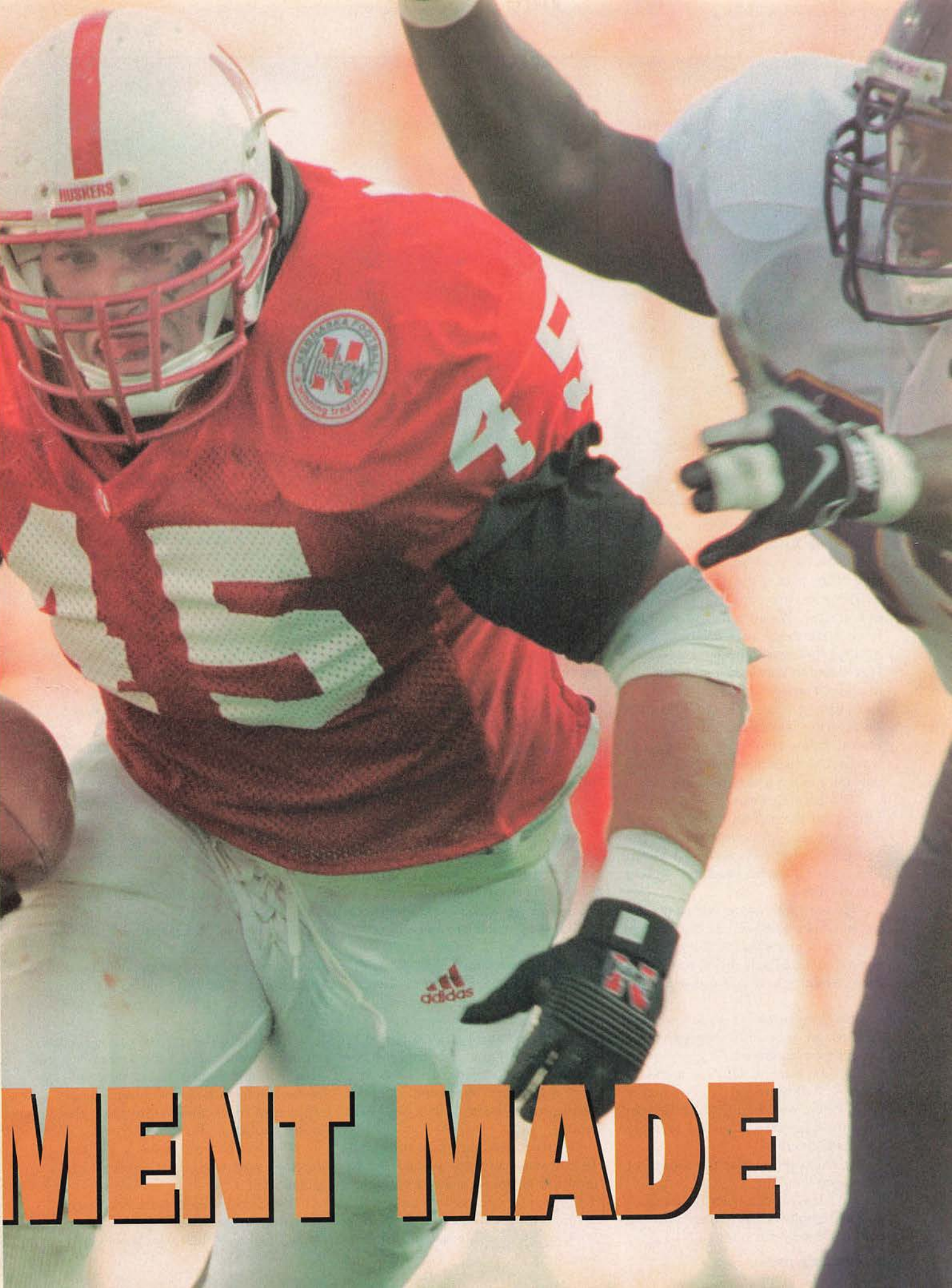
"We thought that was the key to our defensive play this game. If we could get early pressure on him, it was going to make everybody else's

Joel Makovicka and his backfield mates steam-rolled over Washington to the tune of 434 yards on the ground.

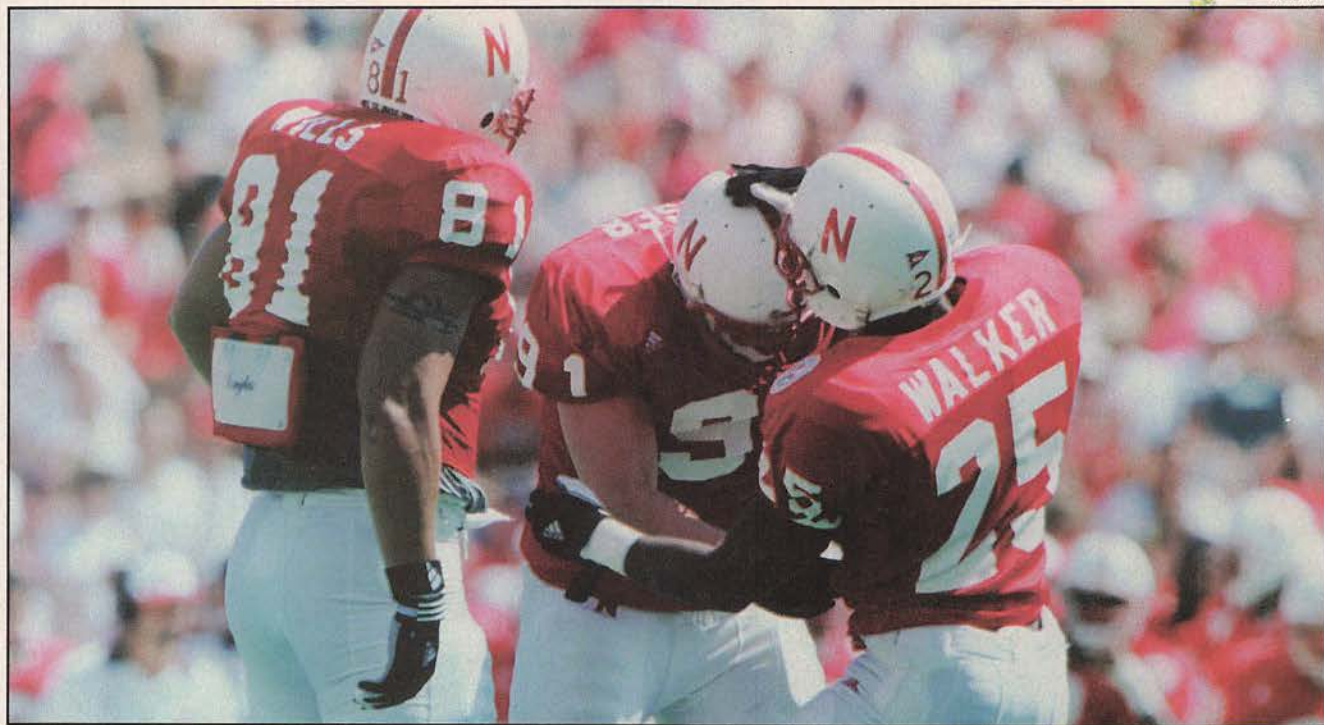
Scott Babin

**Critics Take Notice:
The Huskers Are Still
A Team To Be
Reckoned With.
Just Ask Washington
By Mike Babcock**

STATE



MENT MADE



Aaron Wills (81), Loran Kaiser (91) and Joe Walker each made their presence known as the Cornhusker defense limited the Huskies to just 3.8 yards per play.

job easier. And I think we came out right off the bat and got inside his head a little bit (so that) he wasn't comfortable sitting back in the pocket."

The pressure couldn't have come any earlier. Washington's first play from scrimmage was a Huard pass attempt that was deflected by Kelsay. Huard had to knock the ball to the turf to prevent an interception.

Before giving way to Marques Tuiasosopo late in the third quarter, Huard threw two interceptions and was sacked three times. He was sacked only once in the first two games.

"It's nice to know when you're coming off the ball on every play that he's not as concentrated on his receivers, that he's worried about somebody taking his head off," Kelsay said of Huard.

"He was starting to whine a little bit, but his offensive line didn't give him a lot of protection, and that would get old sitting back there, time after time, when you've got guys in your face."

The Cornhuskers also intercepted Tuiasosopo once and recovered three Washington fumbles.

The first interception was made by 6-foot-4, 310-pound defensive tackle Jason Wiltz, who had missed the two previous games because of a severely sprained left ankle.

The interception was the second of the season for Wiltz.

"He's leading the team right now," middle linebacker and co-captain Jay Foreman said with a laugh. "I mean,

it's a joke, but that just shows what kind of athlete he is. He has great hands, and he can run with the ball after he catches it."

Early in the week, Solich had indicated he would like to see his team get some turnovers. After the game, he said that the turnovers played a big part in Washington's undoing.

"That was a big key," he said. "As I think back on the game, it appeared to me we really had very good field position throughout much of the game, and a lot of that came because of those turnovers. I don't care how good of a team you are, if you have six turnovers, you're really going to struggle."

And struggle Washington did.

By the end of the first quarter, Nebraska led 21-0, easing concerns that the Cornhuskers' 44-game (now 45) winning streak at Memorial Stadium might come to an end.

Washington, of course, was the last team to win in Lincoln, in 1991. But there would be no symmetry, no Husky upset, on an unseasonably hot afternoon with gusting winds.

The temperature at kickoff was 89 degrees. However, it might have seemed hotter to Huard. "After you get to a guy time after time, you start getting in his head a little bit," said Kelsay.

The week leading up to the game, Huard was quoted as saying he respected Nebraska's defense because of his brief experience against the Cornhuskers last season — he was sidelined by an ankle sprain, suffered

when he was tackled by Grant Wistrom early in Washington's 27-14 loss at Seattle.

"Whether or not what he was saying was coming from his heart, we brought the same pressure this year," Kelsay said.

"We were showing a little bit of different stuff. We'd bring some stuff at him, to the point where we wanted to get him out of his comfort zone. And I think we got that done."

Huard's reaction seemed to indicate that the pressure was getting to him.

"I think he said, 'Stop hitting me,' " said Kelsay.

In contrast, Nebraska's offensive line protected Newcombe and opened big holes for him, Evans and fullback Joel Makovicka, who had a big day rushing against Washington a year ago.

This time, Makovicka carried 11 times for 65 yards. "I think they felt that Joel hurt them a lot last year with some inside stuff, so the option game appeared to be there right from the onset," Solich said.

"We kept coming back to (the option) and were getting very big plays off of it."

The Cornhusker wide receivers contributed to the big plays, but mostly as blockers. Nebraska threw only

nine passes, in marked contrast to the California game, in which it threw 28.

The nine passes were "my all-time low, I think," Solich said with a laugh.

"We really didn't have to throw that many passes. It's always difficult for a receiver to not get the ball thrown his way, but when they're hustling downfield and blocking like ours did today, then you have the chance at the big plays. And we certainly had many of those."

The offensive line deserved much of the credit for providing room to run at the line of scrimmage.

"I was certainly pleased with the job the offensive unit did blocking up front," said Solich.

The Cornhuskers went into the game averaging an uncharacteristic 259.7 rushing yards per game to rank sixth in the nation. Part of the reason for the dropoff was the injuries to Newcombe and Evans.

"I don't think a lot of people really understand the kind of (defensive) schemes we have had to go against," said Heskew. "When you've got nine guys on the front, it's kind of hard to run the ball."

Washington, however, was unsuccessful in stopping the run.

Nebraska, ranked No. 2 in both major polls, benefited from the off week following the California game.

"We were looking to take a step forward and not a step back in that week," Heskew said.

"As long as you progress and not go back during an off week, you're doing a good job. I think it showed today that we didn't take a step back. We did get ready for a ballgame and that extra week helped us."

Solich agreed. "It's a little bit of a guessing game when you have an off week as to whether that will benefit you or whether you'll make no progress and it will hurt you," he said.

"We made progress, and it certainly benefited us.

"It was probably our best game. I think our players did pick it up a notch in practice. That was evident the very first Monday coming off the Cal game.

"We had to really slow them down. So they felt this was a key game."

That was apparent just seconds into it, when Newcombe took off running.

"I think our confidence as a football team and our unity has gotten a lot stronger after this game," he said.

A 48-point victory against a top 10-ranked team will do that every time. ■

4TH & 1NCHES

More News From The Washington Game

• Nebraska converted five of six Washington's turnovers into scores for 34 points. The turnovers are listed below.

1) Defensive tackle **Jason Wiltz** recorded his second interception of the season in the first quarter after pressure was applied by **Steve Warren**. Wiltz returned the interception five yards to the UW 22. NU scored two plays later on **DeAngelo Evans'** 14-yard run.

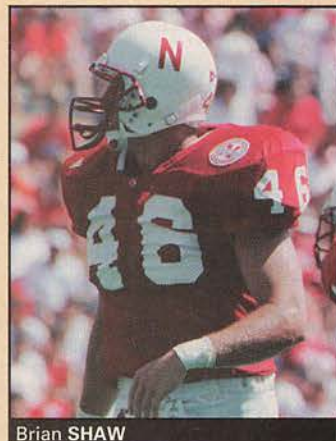
2) Linebacker **Jay Foreman** caused **Willie Hurst** to fumble on the UW 3. Cornerback **Erwin Swiney** recovered and helped on the hit. NU scored seven plays later on Evans' 19-yard run. The drive was aided by a **Bobby Newcombe** to **Shevin Wiggins** game-long 42-yard pass play).

3) **Steve Warren** recovered a UW fumble in the third quarter, but Nebraska fumbled it right back two plays later. This was the only turnover on the day that NU did not convert into a score.

4) DT **Loran Kaiser** sacked **Brock Huard** and **Mike Rucker** forced a fumble, which was recovered by **Khari Reynolds** at the UW 5. Newcombe scored two plays later on a 2-yard run that put NU up 42-7.

5) Rover **Joe Walker** intercepted Huard midway through the third quarter. It was Walker's first interception this season and the third of his career. Newcombe converted the turnover into a score six plays later on another 2-yard run.

6) UW's last turnover was a pass tipped by **Carlos Polk** on a rush by **Brian Shaw**. It was intercepted by RE **Chad Kelsay**. With third-string quarterback **Monte Christo** in the game, fullback **Willie Miller** scored 10 plays later for the final 55-7 margin.



Brian SHAW

• Nebraska tagged Washington for three sacks, extending the Huskers' streak of games with at least one sack in a game to 16.

• The 48-point winning margin by Nebraska is the most ever against a Top 10 Associated Press team. The mark against Washington bettered the 45-point margin put on Colorado on Oct. 31, 1992 (52-7). The 55 points is the second-most scored by NU this year after scoring 56 in the opener against Louisiana Tech.

• Weakside linebacker **Eric Johnson** suffered a hip pointer and might be held out of practice early in the week.

• The Cornhuskers now have won 45 consecutive home games, dating to a 36-21 loss against Washington in 1991. Said Washington coach **Jim Lambright**, who was Don James' defensive coordinator at the time, "That's a good football team. They don't need a home-field advantage."

• Lambright added, "It was a very impressive win from a team that under **Frank Solich** is just right in step with (**Bob Devaney** and (**Tom**) **Osborne**. I thought we did a better job of protecting Brock this year, but we needed to establish some strength and create some positive things against their defense.

"We weren't able to do that. I credit their defense overall.

"Certainly, **Bobby Newcombe** and **DeAngelo Evans** make one heck of a difference. But then again, I think at halftime, all of their running backs were averaging seven yards a carry. ■

1998 Schedule/Record (4-0)

Aug. 29	vs. Louisiana Tech\$	W, 56-27
Sept. 5	Ala.-Birmingham	W, 38-7
Sept. 12	@ California	W, 24-3
Sept. 26	Washington	W, 55-7
Oct. 3	vs. Oklahoma St.&	6 p.m.
Oct. 10	@ Texas A&M	1 p.m.
Oct. 17	Kansas	12:30 p.m.
Oct. 24	Missouri	12:30 p.m.
Oct. 31	Texas	12:30 p.m.
Nov. 7	@ Iowa St.	1 p.m.
Nov. 14	@ Kansas St.	1:10 p.m.
Nov. 27	Colorado	1:30 p.m.

\$ Eddie Robinson Football Classic • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.
& Arrowhead Stadium • Kansas City, Mo.
(Times are subject to change and are Central)

BY THE NUMBERS

Nebraska vs Washington
September 26, 1998 • Lincoln, Nebraska

Score By Quarters

Washington	0	7	0	0	—	7
Nebraska	21	14	20	0	—	55

Team Stats

	UW	NU
First Downs	16	29
Rushing	8	22
Passing	8	5
Penalty	0	2
Rushing Attempts	31	68
Yards Gained Rushing	128	447
Yards Lost Rushing	31	13
Net Yards Rushing	97	434
Net Yards Passing	176	93
Passes Attempted	41	9
Passes Completed	20	6
Had Intercepted	3	0
Total Plays	72	77
Total Net Yards	273	527
Avg. Gain Per Play	3.8	6.8
Fumbles-Lost	3-3	2-2
Penalties-Yards	12-114	7-59
Punts-Yards	7-297	3-116
Avg. Per Punt	42.4	38.7
Punt Returns-Yards	1-10	3-40
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	3-5
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	4-122	1-14
Possession Time	29:15	30:45



Chad Kelsay and the Blackshirts held the ninth-ranked Huskies to just one touchdown and 273 yards of offense.

Individual Leaders

NEBRASKA

RUSHING					
Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Evans, D.	13	146	11.2	60	3
Newcombe, B.	14	79	5.6	19	3
Makovic, J.	11	65	5.9	17	0
Miller, W.	9	48	5.3	16	1
Buckhalter, C.	4	27	6.8	10	1
Alexander, D.	5	25	5.0	7	0
Christo, M.	4	20	5.0	12	0
Legate, B.	2	5	2.5	4	0
Rumty, J.	1	5	5.0	5	0
White, D.	1	4	4.0	4	0

PASSING				
Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Newcombe, B.	5-8-0	62.5	84	0
Christo, M.	1-1-0	100.0	9	0

RECEIVING					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Wiggins, S.	2	45	22.5	42	0
Jackson, S.	1	18	18.0	18	0
Davison, M.	1	12	12.0	12	0
Haafke, B.	1	9	9.0	9	0
Evans, D.	1	9	9.0	9	0

FIELD GOALS			
Name	Att.	Good	LNG
Brown, K.	1	0	0

PUNT RETURNS					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Walker, J.	2	37	18.5	31	0
Wiggins, S.	1	3	3.0	3	0

KICKOFF RETURNS					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Wiggins, S.	1	14	14.0	14	0

DEFENSE							
Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks	
Brown, R.	2	3	5	0	0	0	
Johnson, E.	4	1	5	0	0	1-5	
Foreman, J.	1	3	0	0	0	0	
Polk, C.	4	0	4	1-2	0	0	
Swiney, E.	3	1	4	0	0	0	
Brown, M.	3	1	4	0	0	0	
Walker, J.	4	0	4	0	0	0	
Kelsay, Chad	2	1	3	0	1-0	1-7	
Vanden Bosch, K.	1	2	3	1-2	0	0	
Reynolds, K.	1	2	3	1-5	0	0	
Craver, K.	3	0	3	0	0	0	
Kaiser, L.	1	1	2	1-1	0	1-5	
Warren, S.	1	1	2	0	0	0	

WASHINGTON

RUSHING					
Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Hurst, W.	10	36	3.6	9	0
Shaw, M.	7	25	3.6	16	0
Tulasosopo, M.	1	19	19.0	19	0
Conniff, P.	3	11	3.7	6	0
Cleman, B.	4	11	2.8	8	0
Huard, B.	6	-5	-0.8	10	0

PASSING				
Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Huard, B.	18-32-2	56.3	160	1
Tulasosopo	2-8-1	25.0	16	0
Scott, J.K.	0-1-0	0.0	0	0

RECEIVING					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Looker, D.	7	77	11.0	25	0
Harris, G.	3	24	8.0	11	0
DeSaussure, A.	2	36	18.0	28	0
Jarzynka, J.	2	12	6.0	6	1
Hurst, W.	2	6	3.0	4	0
Davis, R.	2	-1	-0.5	4	0
Hooker, J.	1	15	15.0	15	0
Juergens, C.	1	7	7.0	7	0

FIELD GOALS			
Name	Att.	Good	LNG
Skurski, J.	1	0	0

PUNT RETURNS					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Jarzynka, J.	1	10	10.0	10	0

KICKOFF RETURNS					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Jarzynka, J.	3	79	26.3	35	0
Butler, T.	1	43	43.0	43	0

DEFENSE							
Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks	
Akbar, H.	3	7	10	0	0	0	
Issa, J.	4	4	8	0	0	0	
Johnson, T.	4	3	7	1-3	0	0	
Pharms, J.	3	3	6	0	0	0	
Hairston, M.	1	4	5	0	0	0	
Towns, L.	2	3	5	1-3	0	0	
Johnson, J.	2	3	5	0	0	0	
Tuaiea, M.	3	1	4	0	0	0	
Walker, K.	1	3	4	0	0	0	
Daniels, D.	2	2	4	0	0	0	
Vontoure, A.	1	3	4	0	0	0	

'98 SEASON STATS

RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Buckhalter, C.	4	54	337	84.3	3
Makovic, J.	4	43	216	54.0	1
Evans, D.	1	13	146	146.0	3
Crouch, E.	3	24	134	43.7	4
Newcombe, B.	2	26	91	45.5	5
Alexander, D.	4	22	87	21.8	1
Miller, W.	4	12	72	18.0	2
Christo, M.	3	20	63	21.0	0
Wiggins, S.	4	4	32	8.0	0
Brown, L.	2	1	13	13.0	0
Rumty, J.	2	1	5	2.5	0
Legate, B.	3	2	5	1.7	0
White, D.	4	1	4	1.0	0
Kingston, B.	1	1	3	3.0	0
Tillery, A.	1	1	3	3.0	0
Grager, N.	1	1	3	3.0	0
Stanislav, J.	1	1	1	1.0	0
London, F.	3	1	-2	-0.7	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	3	18-36-1	50.0	206	1
Newcombe, B.	2	14-18-0	77.8	252	1
Christo, M.	3	14-17-0	82.4	196	2

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Wiggins, S.	4	10	171	17.1	42.8	1
Davison, M.	4	9	82	9.1	20.5	0
Jackson, S.	4	7	176	25.1	44.0	2
Cheatham, K.	3	7	56	8.0	18.7	0
Buckhalter, C.	4	5	27	5.4	6.8	0
Debates, T.J.	3	2	27	13.5	9.0	0
Haafke, B.	4	2	15	7.5	3.8	0
Wistrom, T.	3	1	63	63.0	21.0	1
Makovic, J.	4	1	17	17.0	4.3	0
Brown, L.	1	1	11	11.0	11.0	0
Evans, D.	1	1	9	9.0	9.0	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, K.	3	4	2	41

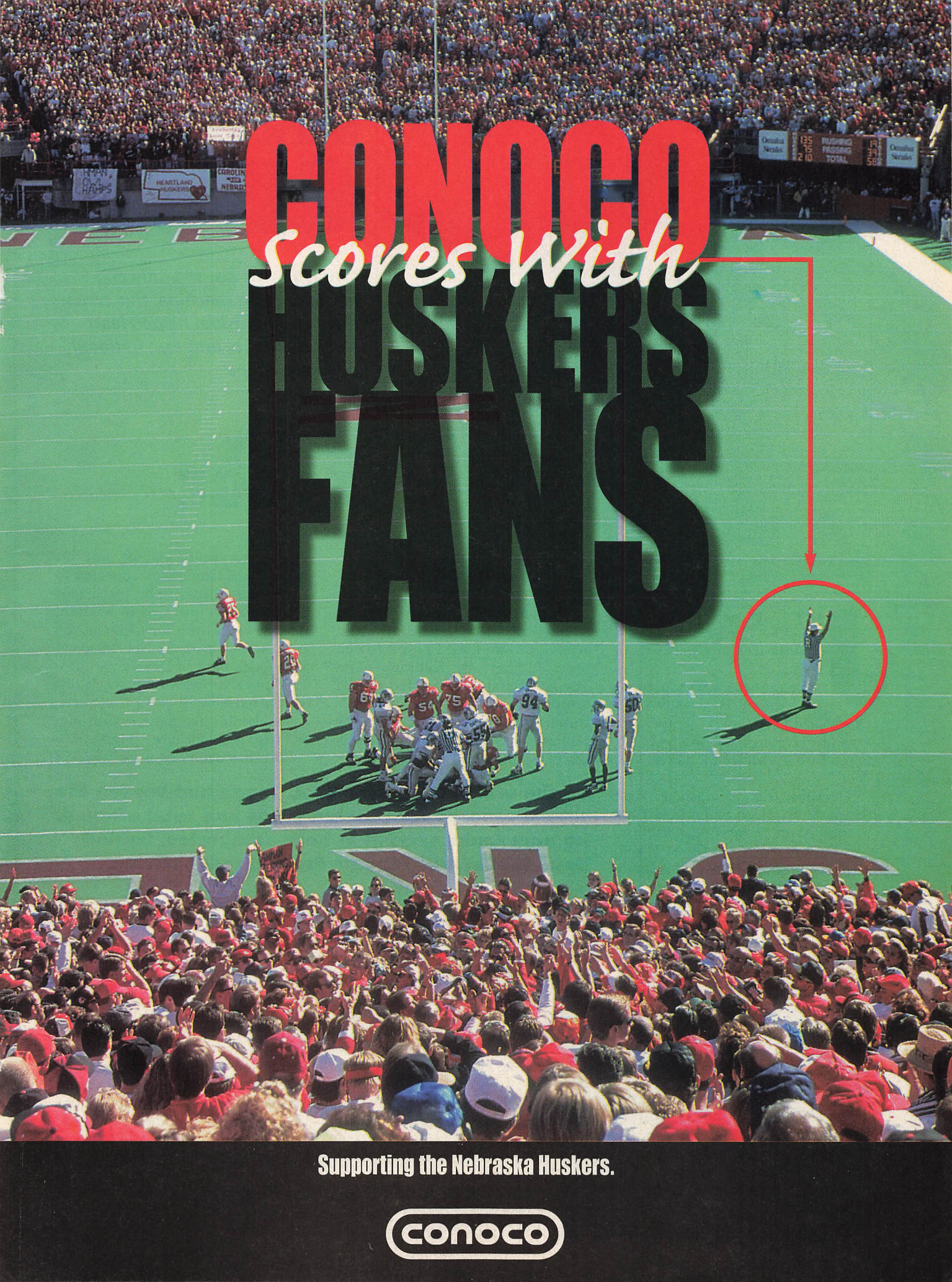
DEFENSE

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Johnson, E.	4	15	11	26	0	0	3-15
Brown, M.	4	13	11	24	1-2	0	0
Foreman, J.	4	10	13	23	1-4	0	5-3
Kelsay, C.	4	15	5	20	2-5	1	2-17
Brown, R.	4	10	7	17	0	0	0
Walker, J.	4	11	6	17	1-5	0	0
Swiney, E.	4	11	5	16	0	0	0
Shaw, B.	3	7	9	16	1-2	0	0
Kaiser, L.	4	5	9	14	1-1	0	5-16
Vanden Bosch, K.	4	7	4	11	2-7	0	2-29
Warren, S.	4	5	4	9	0	0	0
Craver, K.	3	4	3	7	0	0	0
Jackson, J.	4	3	3	6	0	0	1-9
Reynolds, K.	3	4	2	6	1-5	0	0
Ortiz, T.	3	2	3	5	0	0	1-3
Polk, C.	3	5	0	5	2-5	1	0
Wills, A.	3	2	2	5	0	0	0
Vedra, M.	3	1	3	4	0	0	0
Toline, T.	3	3	1	4	0	0	0
Raymond, S.	3	3	0	3	0	0	0
Rucker, M.	3	1	2	3	0	0	0
Lohr, J.	2	2	1	3	0	0	0
Wiltz, J.	2	0	2	2	0	2	0
Slechta, J.	2	1	1	2	0	0	5-3
Finley, C.	1	1	1	2	0	0	0
Hogrefe, Q.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Beveridge, T.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Watchorn, T.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Buettgenback, B.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Ryan, E.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mooberry, B.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Fisher, E.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Woodward, W.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Burrow, J.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Kohl, J.	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Legate, B.	3	0	1	1	0	0	0
Quindt, B.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	1887	1288
Plays	298	275
Average Per Play	6.3	4.7
Average Per Game	455.8	322.0
Net Rushing Yards	1213	242
Attempts	227	116
TDs Rushing	19	1
Net Passing Yards	654	1046
Attempts	71	159
Completions	46	88
Average Per Pass	9.2	6.6
Average Per Catch	14.2	11.9
Average Per Game	163.5	261.5
TDs Passing	5	1
Sacks By Yards	15-92	1-6
Fumbles-Lost	7-4	10-3
Penalties-Yards	24-205	44-336

Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	49	56	27	41	0	173
Opponents	0	20	18	6	0	44



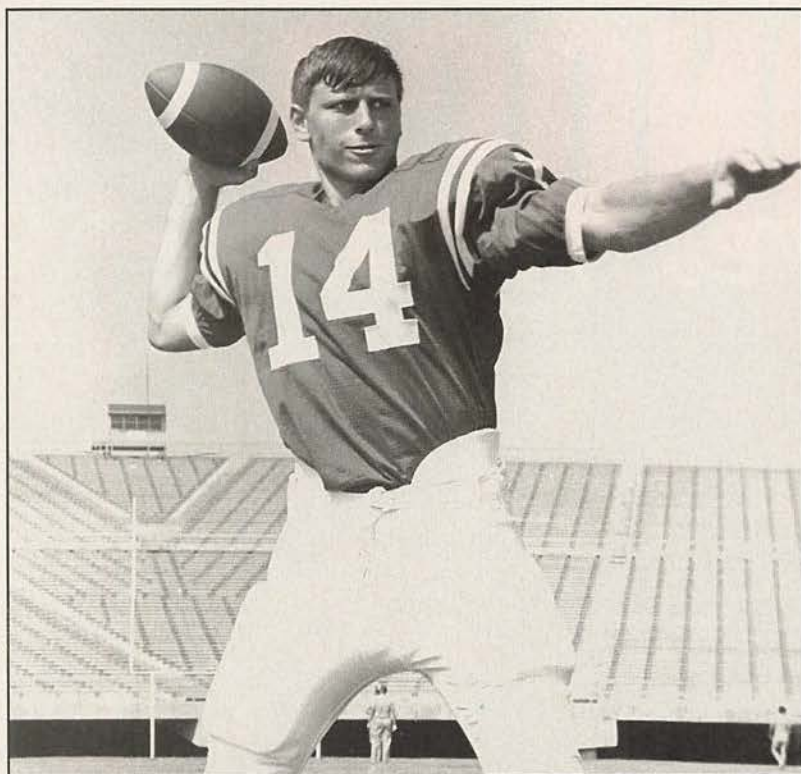
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NU's Top 10 QBs...

While he was not the only cog in the Big Red machine, this transplanted Nebraskan helped lead Nebraska to its first two national championships

Jerry TAGGE

The prospect of playing with his high school teammates appealed to Tagge. The prospect of his playing for Bob Devaney appealed to his dad, William Tagge, who went with his son on a recruiting trip to Nebraska and got to kick back in Devaney's office chair and wear one of Devaney's distinctive red hats.

He would take the hat with him and wear it "all the time," Tagge said.

Devaney's skill as a recruiter, of

Jerry Tagge was coming home when he arrived at Nebraska for his freshman season in 1968.

Tagge was a transplanted Nebraskan. He was born in Omaha and lived there until his father was transferred from the SAC Air Force Base in Bellevue to Green Bay, Wis.

His father was a graduate of Wood River, Neb., High School, and his grandparents farmed near Shelton, Neb., before retiring to Grand Island. He was four years old when his family moved to Green Bay.

The family ties to Nebraska remained, however, and they were a factor in his decision to become a Cornhusker. "That was another piece of the puzzle," Tagge said recently.

He narrowed his choices to Nebraska, Michigan State and Wisconsin, and then he narrowed them further, to Nebraska and Michigan State. He settled on the Cornhuskers because of the family connection, and also because Nebraska recruited three of his high school teammates.

By the end of his junior year, Tagge had broken the school records for passing yards and total offense. He now ranks second in both categories, behind Dave Humm and Tommie Frazier, respectively.

The Cornhusker recruiting class from the previous season included Dennis Gutzman and Jim Anderson, and Tagge's recruiting class included Dave Mason. All four were from West High in Green Bay.

When he was a junior, Tagge was the starting quarterback, Mason and Anderson were the starting halfbacks and Gutzman was the starting fullback in a "full-house backfield," said Tagge, a financial planner based in Omaha, as well as a sideline reporter on Cornhusker radio broadcasts.

Mason, Anderson and Tagge were starters on the 1970 and 1971 championship teams.

parents as well as players, was reflected in his coaching success. Tagge's signature on a letter-of-intent translated into the back-to-back national titles.

One player wasn't the reason, certainly. And Tagge shared playing time with Van Brownson, also a junior, during the Cornhuskers' first national championship run in 1970.

But he was as much an offensive difference-maker as wingback Johnny Rodgers, his favorite pass receiver, and I-back Jeff Kinney, the player who received most of Tagge's handoffs.

Tagge's Cornhusker career got off to a slow start. He was hampered by injuries on coach Cleve Fischer's freshman team and played sparingly while Brownson led it to a 4-0 record.

FIELD GENERALS

Dennis Claridge	1961-63
Bob Churchich	1964-66
Jerry Tagge	1969-71
Dave Humm	1972-74
Vince Ferragamo	1975-76
Turner Gill	1980-83
Steve Taylor	1985-88
Gerry Gdowski	1987-89
Tommie Frazier	1992-95
Scott Frost	1996-97

Tagge played well the next spring, however, and the two alternated in 1969. Even so, Tagge broke the Cornhusker single-season record for total offense with 1,364 yards.

He was the "passing whiz of Nebraska's pair of Big Eight stars," according to the 1970 Cornhusker media guide, completing 95-of-165 passes for 1,249 yards and four touchdowns.

Tagge carried more of the load at quarterback in 1970, capping the season by stretching the ball across the goal line from one yard out with 8:50 remaining to give Nebraska a 17-12 victory against Louisiana State in the Orange Bowl game and the *Associated Press* national championship.

He started all 13 games in the perfect 1971 season, breaking his own school record for total offense with 2,333 yards. Nearly 30 years later, that record remains in the books.

He still has four of Nebraska's top 10 total offense games, including a record 319 yards (85 rushing, 234 passing) in a 36-0 victory against Missouri at Columbia in 1971.

By the end of his junior year, Tagge had broken the school records for passing yards and total offense. He now ranks second in both categories behind Dave Humm and Tommie Frazier, respectively.

Tagge completed 348-of-581 passes for 4,704 yards and 32 touchdowns, with 19 interceptions — only four in 1971. His .599 completion percentage is a school record for 100 or more passes.

His 2,019 passing yards in 1971 rank third on Nebraska's all-time list.

The 6-foot-2, 215-pound Tagge had the necessary physical skills for an offense that was considerably more pass-oriented than it would become when Tom Osborne succeeded Devaney. It was Osborne who designed the offense, however, after "Bob turned everything over to him," Tagge said.

Osborne, who coached the receivers and called plays in the pressbox during games, began working with the quarterbacks and meeting with them daily at the training table in 1969.

"Tom covered everything in those meetings," said Tagge. "He was thorough. He just didn't leave anything uncovered. 'Here's how we're going to attack them.' It was really educational."

And Tagge was an eager student. "They were fun meetings," he said.

"He didn't waste your time. He

10 QUESTIONS

Huskers Illustrated talks with split end MATT DAVISON

1 Did Kenneth Starr's report on President Clinton go too far?

I think it did go too far. I really don't care about (Clinton's relationship with Monica Lewinsky). It isn't affecting me. I think he's doing a heck of a job as president. Whatever happens in the hallway at the Oval Office is his business.

2 Who has the best hands on the team?

(Wingback) Lance Brown has really good hands. He's the man.

3 Jerry Springer show — quality entertainment or trash?

Good entertainment. It's great stuff. Everybody likes to see a good fight, whether you're walking along the street or whether you're watching TV.

4 What would you do if you won the lottery?

I'd donate the money to every organization I think needs help and quit football (laughter).

5 Blocking by receivers — overrated or important?

Very important. Very important. Receivers' blocks can make an eight-yard gain a 60-yard gain. Teams that watch film and really understand the game of football know that. That's what we try to get done here.

6 Would you prefer Mary Ann or Ginger?

Ginger, because I can't go with a chick that has two names. I don't know why.

7 Do you prefer David Letterman or Jay Leno?

Letterman, because I can't stand to look at Leno. I think Leno is funny sometimes, but I like Letterman a lot. He gets the hot girls on his show.

8 MTV or VH1?

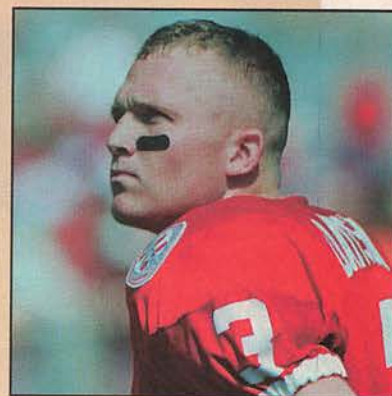
MTV. I like their news, and they have good videos most of the time.

9 What's the worst movie you've seen recently?

That's easy. The worst movie I've seen ever — in a theater, rented, anything — is *Knock Off* with Jean-Claude Van Damme. I recommend that nobody see it. I wouldn't pay a dollar to see it again. You'd have to pay me a million bucks to sit through it again.

10 Why did you choose to watch it in the first place?

We went to it as a team before the Alabama-Birmingham game. We all wanted to leave about a quarter of the way through. It was just pathetic.



Girls named Betty Jo or Carol Ann shouldn't count on being asked out by Davison.

came prepared. He didn't just show up and start drawing on the chalkboard. His train of thought was easy to follow. He was a good communicator."

There was no drudgery. "I just loved it," Tagge said.

Though his statistics weren't extraordinary, Tagge's play was among the deciding factors in the 1971 "Game of the Century" against Oklahoma. He directed the winning drive with workmanlike precision, taking the Cornhuskers 74 yards in 12 plays, three of which were third downs.

The first was a third-and-1 at the Nebraska 35-yard line, and the last was a third-and-goal from the Sooner 2, with Kinney carrying on both — the

second of those for the winning touchdown.

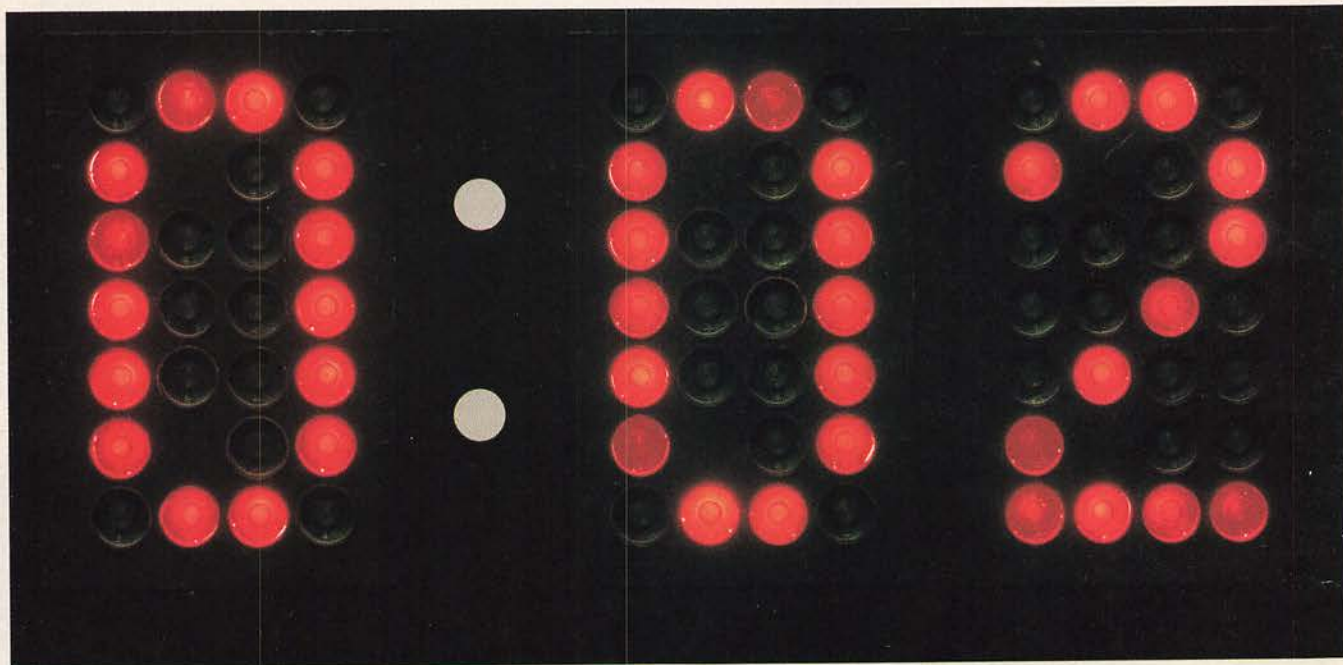
Nebraska needed eight yards from the Oklahoma 46-yard line on the other third down. Tagge took the snap on the crucial play with four receivers running hook patterns. Moments before he tucked the ball away and tried to run for the first down, Tagge caught a glimpse of Rodgers improvising to get open.

Tagge threw the ball low, and Rodgers went down to catch it for an 11-yard gain.

That was the play of the game — and of the season.

And the pass went from one Nebraskan to another. ■

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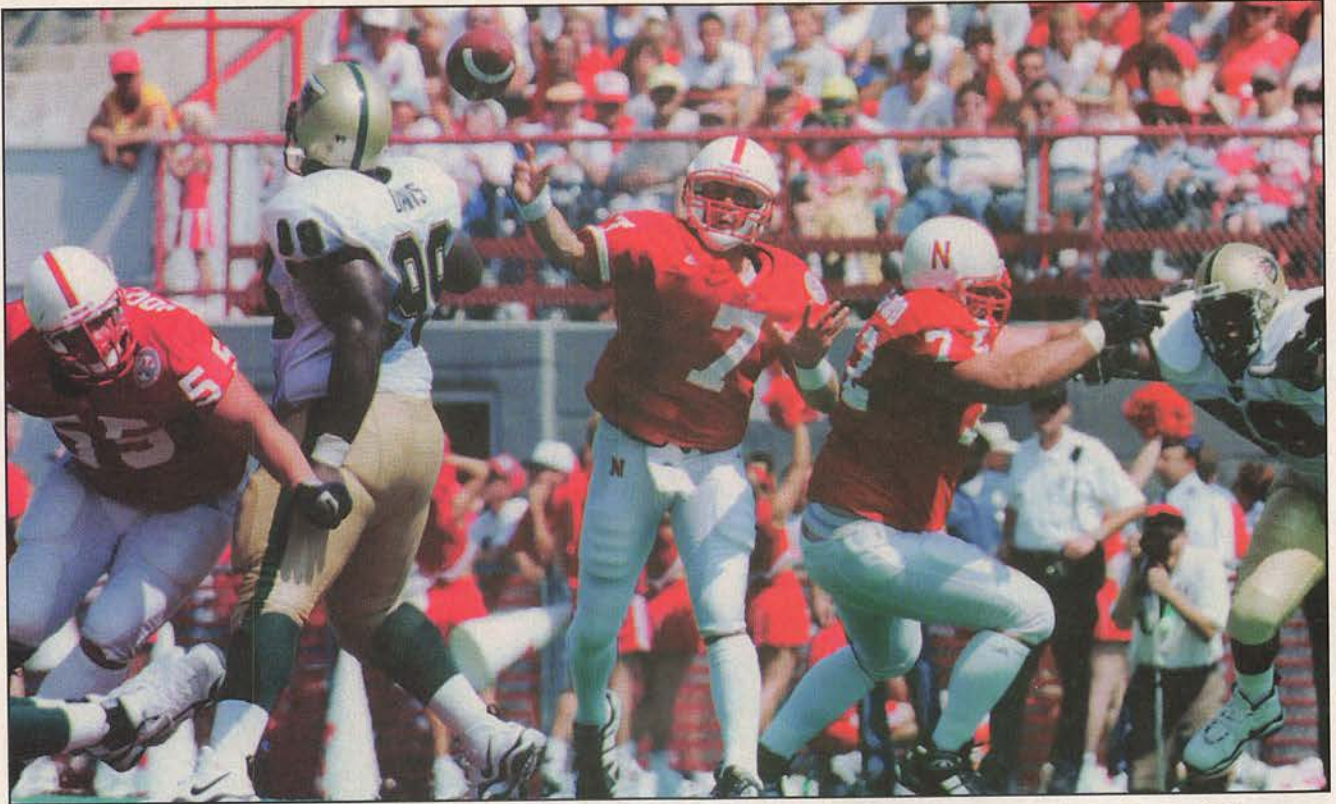
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CROUCH POTATO NO MORE

ERIC CROUCH made his debut with 6:38 remaining in the fourth quarter of Nebraska's 56-27 opening-game victory against Louisiana Tech. The first play was a fullback trap.

Joel Makovicka gained three yards. "It felt good," Crouch said.

The Cornhuskers' redshirt freshman quarterback was a little awestruck by the experience. "I turn around to hand the ball off, and I'm handing off to Joel Makovicka," he said. "I saw him playing when I was in high school. It was just one of those things."

Handing the ball to Makovicka, or any other Nebraska running back, was something of which Crouch sometimes dreamed of doing when he was a student at Millard North in Omaha.

And he was finally doing that, before 76,000 fans at Memorial Stadium.

His first series continued only three more plays before wingback Shevin Wiggins lost a fumble. But a little over two minutes later, Crouch was back on the field, directing what was officially a five-play, 55-yard touchdown "drive" — I-back Correll Buckhalter ran 43 yards on the fifth play.

Crouch finished with one carry for

six yards and 1-of-3 passing for five yards.

Statistically, his collegiate debut was inauspicious, but he was smiling afterward. "It's nice to be out there in front of everybody, participating in something I love to do," Crouch said.

A year ago, there were days when he wondered if he would ever play football again. He wasn't feeling self-pity. Quite the contrary. He was just trying to be realistic about the situation. The day after last season's opener against Akron, he underwent surgery on his right ankle and his left knee.

The ankle problem was a result of numerous sprains from a career as an option quarterback. "I sprained it so many times that it was really crummy and beat up and there were a lot of things in there that needed to be taken care of," Crouch said. "They removed things and drilled holes.

"I felt like I had a broken leg after I

He wishes the circumstances could have been different, but the injury to Bobby Newcombe has allowed Eric Crouch to show doubters that he's more than just a varsity sub

By Mike Babcock

got out of the operation room."

Before the surgeons were finished, "they flipped me over and did an exploration surgery on my knee, and they found out it was a nerve problem," he said. "I had two (surgeries) at once.

"It was serious. I'm getting to college and thinking maybe I've got a

chance to play my first year, and then I get told by the doctors that I need two operations. So it was a setback."

Instead of competing with Bobby Newcombe for a back-up job at quarterback, Crouch stood by and watched — balanced on crutches for a time. It was not how he imagined his first season.

"There were a lot of times where I thought: Maybe this is the end for me," he said.

"I was thinking, bone problem, nerve problem . . . those things are going through your mind. Are you ever going to be the same player, especially when both legs get operated on?"

"That crossed my mind. Maybe I'm not going to be able to do it."

Most of the time, however, he told himself he was strong enough mentally, as well as physically, to recover from the surgeries, discard the crutches and come back stronger than before.

He watched practice even while he was on crutches, something many players who are rehabilitating injuries don't do because it's a painful reminder of what they are missing.

"The reverse side of that is you go out there and remind yourself every day of what you need to be doing to get yourself back on the practice field," Crouch said. "It's not until you're away from it that you miss it, and I didn't notice that until last year when I had those operations."

"Sometimes, you get burned out on football. Then you're out for a short period of time, two or three months, and you really realize: This is something I want to do with my life. This is something I enjoy, have fun with. So I think that really helped me out, too, as far as getting back as fast as I could."

Crouch had the surgeries on Aug. 31. By late November, he was on the practice field, playing quarterback on the scout team. By spring practice, he was back competing with Newcombe — who ended up playing wingback last season — and Frankie London for the No. 1 quarterback job.

Again, Crouch experienced something of a setback. Newcombe finished spring practice atop the depth chart, causing Crouch to consider his prospects. "There are a lot of things running through your mind," he said. "Obviously, one of them is: 'Am I good enough to start in college?'"


He quickly realized, however, that "those are coaching decisions, based on experience, and obviously, Bobby had the game experience last year. He played for the whole season."



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Crouch next had to decide whether to remain at quarterback or switch to another position. He and London were given that option to potentially get two of the three on the field.

"I told myself, I love the game so much I just want to play; I kept telling myself that. Anything the coaches want me to do, I'll be happy with that. But then it came down to them asking me what I wanted to do," said Crouch, who has played quarterback since he was in elementary school.

"They kind of reversed the role, and I said, 'You know, I'd like to play quarterback still, if that's where you want me.' And they said, 'OK. That's where we think you should play.'"

"I think that was a good decision to keep me where I am."

Had he decided to move to another position, he would likely have made the move to wide receiver. "I might even have tried I-back if they had let me, tried to run the ball because I think my abilities fit running the ball," Crouch said. "I did that throughout high school, so that's what I'm used to."

He was the *USA Today* Player of the Year in Nebraska and a *Parade Magazine* All-America honoree as a senior. He was a two-time, all-class, all-state selection by both the *Lincoln Journal Star* and *Omaha World-Herald*, the first quarterback so honored since Scott Frost in 1991 and 1992.

He also was a sprinter on the track team and finished second to Cornhusker teammate Erwin Swiney of Lincoln (Northeast) in the 100 meters at the 1997 state championships.

His experience directing Millard North's "Wingbone" offense prepared him well.

He and Newcombe both were among the nation's highest rated option quarterbacks coming out of high school in 1997. Despite the fact that they were competing for the same position, they immediately became friends, and they have remained that way.

"We could have taken it two ways," Crouch said. "We could either be enemies and teammates and handle it that way, or we could be friends and teammates and try to handle it that way. I think both of us kind of knew that the best thing to do would be to be friends and try to help each other out as much

as possible. I feel we're both team players. And that just tells a little bit about our personalities as quarterbacks and as leaders of this team."

Playing quarterback, after all, is a "team job," he said.

"All my outlooks are 100 percent for the team. I don't look at it as (being) about myself, not at all. It's all a team thing. Anything I can do to help this team is what I'm about."

What he did to help the team prior to the opener against Louisiana Tech was prepare as if he were going to be the starter. Solich, like Tom Osborne

California. The Louisiana Tech game, in particular, was an eye-opener.

"I probably didn't expect to play in that game," Crouch said. "But when I saw Bobby with the knee problem, then right away I was in with the No. 1 offense. That's when it really hit me that depth, especially at quarterback, is very important considering the type of offense we run. The quarterback's handling the ball a lot. He's running a lot. He's throwing a lot. And he's taking a lot of hits."

As a result, "(the coaches) like to get two quarterbacks, for sure, ready to play. And then there's a third guy who comes up and takes a few reps with the offense, just to make sure that if there's any possibility he needs to go in, then he can feel comfortable, at least, with a few plays."

Had that not been Nebraska's philosophy, the Cornhuskers might have had problems in the California game. It wasn't clear leading up to the game whether Newcombe would be able to play. It turned out he wasn't, so Crouch started, despite being hampered by a sore hamstring.

The hamstring tightened up at halftime, and Crouch had to come out of the game in the third quarter.

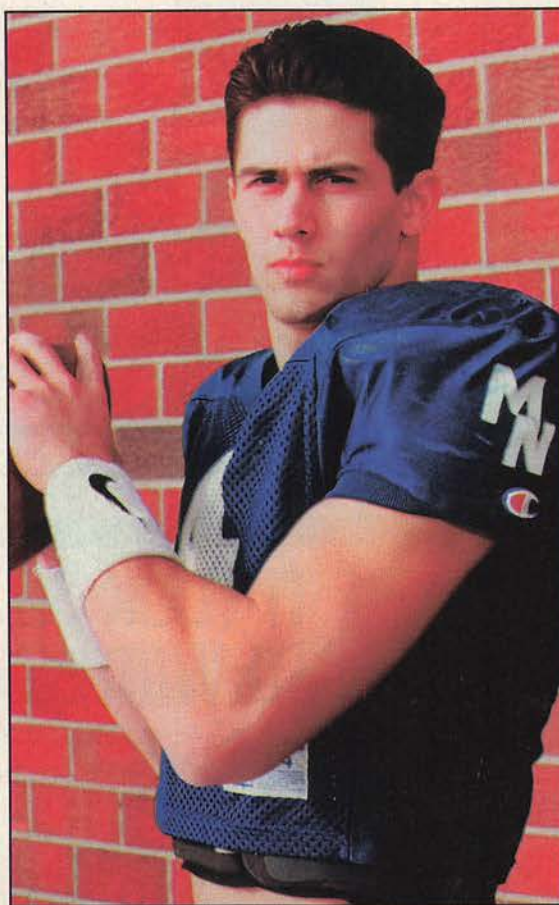
Crouch is no longer awestruck by the Nebraska football experience. He had "about three quarters" to stand on the sideline and soak up the atmosphere during the Louisiana Tech game.

"I noticed the crowd when I was on the sideline," Crouch said. "When I went in, it was really different. I took a deep breath. The guys in the huddle said, 'You can do this; just stay calm.'"

"I kind of knew inside I could do it, that I could stay calm, enjoy myself out there and have fun. It was real nice to get out there and take a snap. It was good. I felt comfortable."

Crouch, who also took recruiting trips to Ohio State, Notre Dame and Iowa State, knew it would be like that at Nebraska — which is among the many reasons he settled on the Cornhuskers.

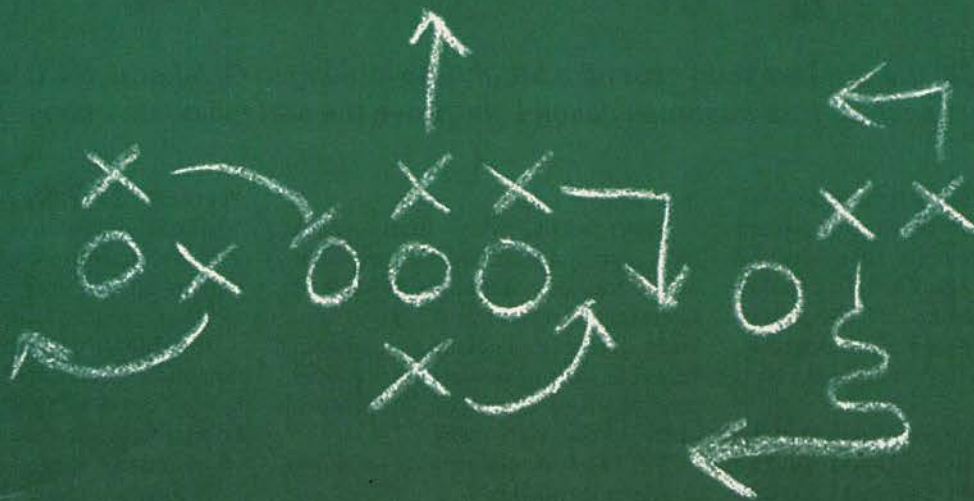
"It's just a feeling you get in your heart, your stomach, that this is the right place," he said. "It's kind of weird now that I'm representing the state as a football player and student-athlete." And handing the ball to Makovicka. ■



Crouch was an extraordinary runner at Millard North, rushing for 1,960 yards as a junior and 1,300 yards as a senior, despite being hampered by the ankle injury.

before him, emphasizes the need for two quarterbacks to be ready. "It was tough at first to buy into that," Crouch said. "But as I found out, the second-team player is just as important because you become the first-team player when someone gets hurt."

Newcombe suffered a partial tear of the left posterior cruciate ligament during the Louisiana Tech game, providing Crouch the opportunity to play in the fourth quarter and then start against Alabama-Birmingham and



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Super Sooners

Until 1988, the Huskers didn't spend a lot of time looking in Oklahoma for talent, but players such as true freshman Jason Lohr prove the state shouldn't be ignored

Jason Lohr offered Jeremy Slechta a little encouragement and advice the first time the two were on the field together during Nebraska's 38-7 victory against Alabama-Birmingham.

"I told him to try not to think about it," Lohr said.

Lohr was the grizzled veteran of the two, having also played in the Cornhuskers' opener against Louisiana Tech while Slechta watched from the sideline as a potential redshirt.

Both are true freshmen playing a position at which Nebraska was in need of depth — defensive tackle. The depth became more of a concern after senior starter Jason Wiltz suffered an ankle injury.

So plans for redshirting Slechta were quickly discarded.

Lohr and Slechta rotated with junior Steve Warren and sophomore Loran Kaiser against Alabama-Birmingham. Both freshman playing at the same time was "pretty neat," said Lohr.

"But that's just the way things happen, the way things work out."

Lohr had no idea he would be playing immediately when he signed a letter-of-intent with the Cornhuskers during his senior year at Jenks High School in Tulsa, Okla., but he didn't expect to be sitting out as a redshirt, either.

"I didn't know what was going to happen," he said. "I was going to just wait and see how two-a-days went and go from there."

Two-a-days went well enough for him that before they were over, he was told he would be playing instead of redshirting. At least, that's how he remembers it.

"Probably like a week and a half after two-a-days started, or something like that, (the coaches)

told me," he said.

Lohr, Slechta, who's from LaVista, Neb., and Jon Clanton, another scholarship freshman defensive tackle from Glendale, Ariz., all got a good look from defensive coordinator Charlie McBride during two-a-day practices. And all three displayed the physical ability to play right away.

But Lohr seemed to pick up things a little more quickly.

He was well-founded in fundamentals, coming from a high school program that won the Oklahoma large-schools state championship in each of the last two seasons. Jenks High went undefeated last season said Lohr, the *Tulsa World* Defensive Player of the

Year and a *SuperPrep* All-American.

The school has won six consecutive district championships. Five other players off last year's team also went to major colleges, Lohr said.

In addition to great football tradition and excellent coaches, Jenks High has a "good weight room," which Lohr, a three-year varsity starter visited frequently.

"I like to work out," he said. "When I miss a workout, I don't know what to do. It's pretty important to me."

So was preparing for his first collegiate season. Lohr was among those incoming freshmen who spent the summer in Lincoln, beginning classes and working out with the returning players.

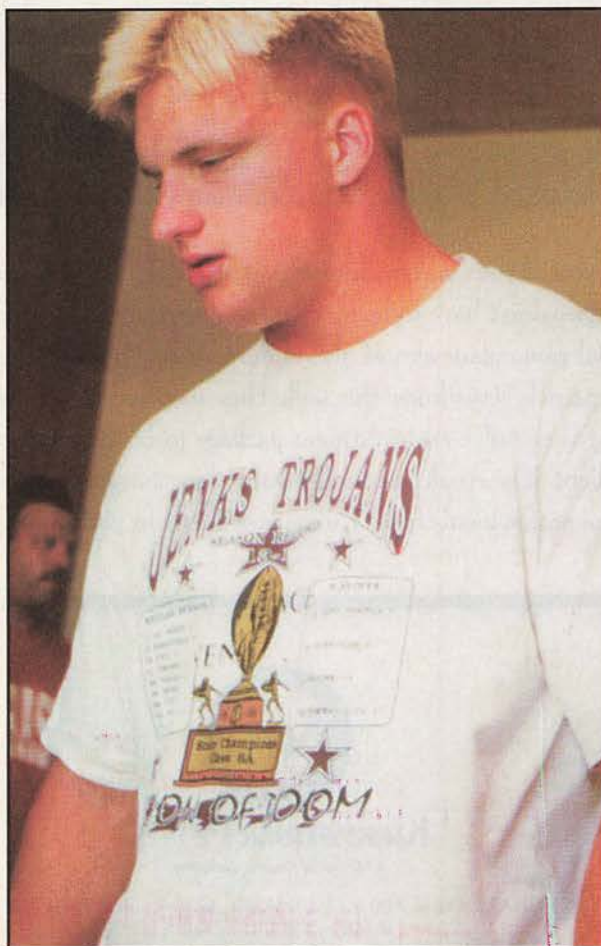
Lohr arrived the first week in June and made only two quick trips home.

Nebraska didn't get a football scholarship recruit out of Oklahoma until 1988, according to Cornhusker media guides. The late Victor Stachmus, a lineman from McAlester, Okla., was the first. Two months after signing his letter-of-intent, Stachmus was diagnosed with leukemia, and he died that summer.

Will Shields, the 1992 Outland Trophy winner, signed with Nebraska in 1989, and Mike Minter, Willis Brown and Ben Rutz all were Cornhusker scholarship recruits in 1992.

Shields and Minter were from Lawton, Brown was from Edmond and Rutz was from Oklahoma City.

Lohr and freshman kicker Josh Brown, who's from tiny Foyil, have brought Nebraska's total to 10, among them senior center and co-captain Josh Heskew, who's from Yukon.



Lohr, who was born in Saginaw, Mich., has spent most of his life in Oklahoma, living in Enid, Edmond and Guthrie before moving to Tulsa when he was in the fifth grade.

Even so, he wasn't a fan of either Oklahoma or Oklahoma State, which is where he would have gone had he decided to stay in the state. He took a recruiting visit there, and "it was pretty cool," he said. "They had a good weight program, and their coaches were nice, straightforward and everything."

"But when I came up here . . . I don't know. It just felt right. It was like family. They have a great weight program, even better than Oklahoma

Oklahoma Connections

Victor Stachmus, lineman	McAlester (1988)
Will Shields, off. guard	Lawton (1989)
Willis Brown, def. back	Edmond (1992)
Mike Minter, rover	Lawton (1992)
Ben Rutz, quarterback	Oklahoma City (1992)
Josh Heskew, center	Yukon (1993)
Kareem Sears, linebacker	Enid (1995)
Jon Rutherford, off. guard	Midwest City (1997)
Josh Brown, kicker	Foyil (1998)
Jason Lohr, def. tackle	Tulsa (1998)

State's, supposedly the best in the nation I guess. All the guys, they were real nice. And they have a lot of (academic) help for you, so you shouldn't fail."

His classmates at Jenks High didn't have a problem with him becoming a Cornhusker.

"They really didn't say much," he said. "I didn't get too much criticism, not too bad."

As is the case with most freshmen, Lohr found the transition from high school to college football a little overwhelming at first.

"Things happen a lot faster," he said. "And people are bigger and stronger, so that makes a big difference, too."

When McBride told him he was going in for the first time against Louisiana Tech, "I was really nervous," Lohr said with a laugh. "But after I was out there, it wasn't too bad."

"And the second game I wasn't as nervous as the first."

The cliché says that once the ball is snapped for the first time, a player becomes a veteran. So, theoretically, Lohr had the experience Slechta lacked before his first play against Alabama-Birmingham.

After that, they were both veterans . . . sort of. ■

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Recruits Keep Options Open

RUMORS

Nebraska's commitment list is now up to nine as they play in their non-conference portion of their football schedule. The total ranks the Huskers behind Texas in the Big 12 Conference, but still has them among the top ten in the country.

Getting early verbal commitments is a must in college football recruiting today, but holding those commitments seems to have become an art form in itself. Other colleges don't stop calling an athlete just because he has given a verbal commitment to another school.

If that athlete continues to take phone calls from coaches, and most of them do, then coaches will work to get them to visit their school. Texas has 17 verbal commitments early, but several of them are still talking to other coaches and working to set up visits to other schools.

Tight end **Chad Stevens** of Cy-Fair, the number one rated tight end in Texas, gave a verbal commitment to the Longhorns some time ago, but he now says that he wants to take five visits. Defensive back **Dakari Pearson** of Dayton, Texas, was one of the very first to commit to the Longhorns back in the summer but now is talking about taking visits. Pearson is an excellent option quarterback, and schools like Oklahoma are talking to him about playing quarterback on the college level. That has piqued Pearson's interest in other programs, because Texas is recruiting him to play defensive back and Pearson loves playing quarterback.

There is some thought that Nebraska is recruiting athlete/tight end **Darren Naatjes** of Inwood (West Lyons), Iowa, as a quarterback. Naatjes is a tight end but is so athletic that he could be a very good option quarterback. Remember, the Huskers always have a great athlete at quarterback, and Naatjes certainly fits that category. Naatjes is not opposed to the idea of playing quarterback on the college level but admits he's probably better suited at another position.

Quarterback **C.J. Leak** of Charlotte, N.C., is showing more and more interest in Nebraska. Leak is the nation's top run/pass quarterback prospect and has the Cornhuskers equal with Florida State as the early recruiting returns come in.

Quarterback **Chris Massey** of Spiro, Okla., is another who likes Nebraska. Massey is ranked right behind Leak in most recruiting polls and says Nebraska, OU, Notre Dame, Oklahoma State and Arkansas are at the top of his list. ■

Searching For A Hidden Treasure

Often overlooked in the Cornhuskers' offense, tight ends play a key role in blocking and receiving

By James HALE

As Nebraska's multiple option offense continues to evolve in the 90's, their pass receivers are no longer forgotten members of the offense. Nebraska still has a reputation as the top rushing football team in the country, and nobody uses their tailbacks and fullbacks as well as the Cornhuskers.

However, the Nebraska coaching staff figured out a long time ago that to win in college football today, you have to be able to adapt to a number of defensive sets. Yes, there might even be a time where the Cornhuskers' rushing game is held in check, or at least isn't churning out 400 yards per game, and they might have to throw the football a little.

Earlier this season in the win over California, the Cornhuskers threw the ball 23 times in an attempt to back the Golden Bears off the line of scrimmage.

Nebraska's tight ends are almost always known as some of the best blocking tight ends in the country, but when the Cornhuskers have a tight end that can really catch the football, they know how to get it to him. Senior **Sheldon Jackson** is an excellent receiver, but his graduation after this season will leave the Cornhuskers without an experienced tight end on campus.

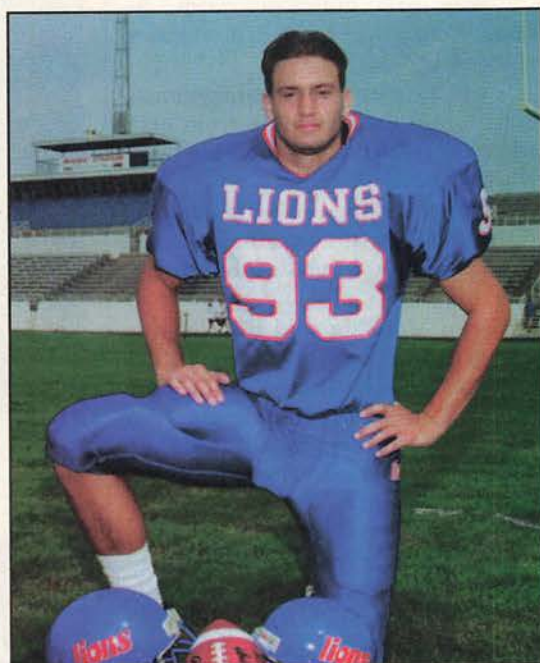
Nebraska did recruit a pair of excellent tight ends last year in **Jon Bowling** and **Aaron Golliday**, but the Huskers rely so heavily upon their tight ends that Frank Solich and his staff will continue to recruit the very best talent at the position.

The very best tight end in

the country plays his prep ball in Big 12 country. **Bo Scaife** (6-foot-4, 215 pounds, with 4.4 speed in the 40-yard dash) of Denver (Mullen), Colo., has a tremendous combination of speed and power. Strong enough to dominate on the line of scrimmage at tight end, Scaife is so athletic for a big man that he plays at least half the game at wide receiver at Mullen.

As a junior, Scaife caught 50 passes for 850 yards and found the end zone five times from the H-back position. Those numbers turned heads from coast to coast, earning Scaife preseason All-America honors and placing him at the top of recruiting boards from over 60 colleges in the country.

This season, Scaife is off to an even better start, having caught five passes in two games for 250 yards and four touchdowns. Scaife's longest touch-



Josh Tucker of Moore, Okla., played behind current Oklahoma Sooners Frank Romero last season, but now he is making a name for himself as both a tight end and a linebacker.

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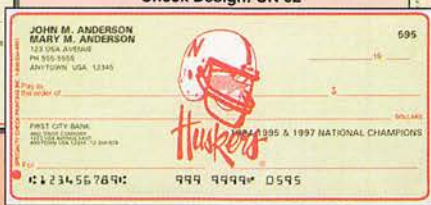
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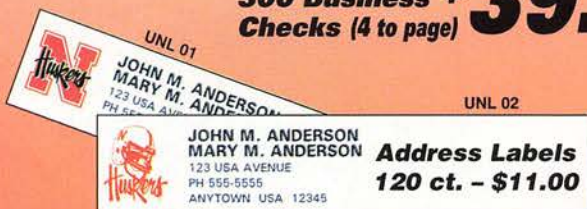
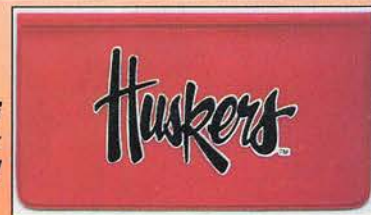
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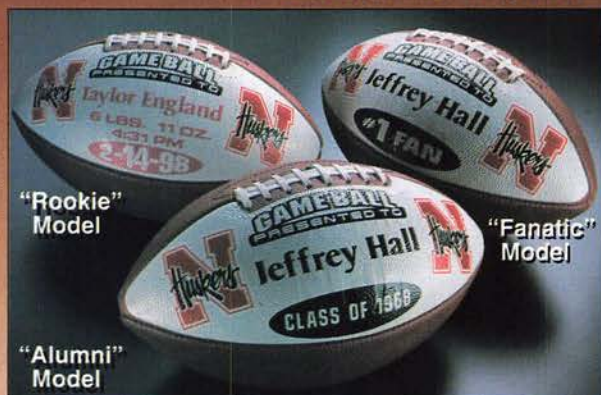
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down jaunt this season is 77 yards, and he ran away from defenders the final 30 yards. There isn't a hybrid style of defender on the prep ranks who can hold Scaife, and he's not going to meet his athletic equal until he gets on the college level.

As one might expect, every college program in the country wants him, and Scaife makes no bones about the fact that he wants to go to a college program that will figure out a way to get him the football.

"I want to go to a school that has quarterbacks that know how to get everybody involved in the offense," Scaife said. "(The quarterbacks) need to know how to spread the ball around, and the offense has to be multiple enough to take advantage of a number of things. I won't go to a one-dimensional offense that just runs the ball, that is for sure. I will go to a program that shows a balanced offense as long as they have a history of throwing to their tight end some."

Scaife says he's wide open in recruiting and that his list of schools changes daily. UCLA, Texas, Georgia, Ohio State, Florida, Florida State and Nebraska are at the top of his list for the moment, with the Huskers getting onto the list late.

"Nebraska is a national powerhouse that always has a good team," Scaife said. "I never really see them play much, but I know they have a good coaching staff and a great offense. They are also beginning to throw the ball more, and I feel if they believe they have a weapon at tight end, they will get the ball to him. Plus, I have the speed to also play wide receiver or in the slot, and Nebraska always finds a way to get the ball to players in those positions."

Aaron Lumpkin (6-5, 245, 4.6) of Dayton (Chaminade-Julienne), Ohio, is also one of the very best tight end prospects in the country. Recruiting Lumpkin will be tough, as his older brother, John, is the tight end at Ohio State, and Lumpkin is leaning toward following in his footsteps. However, Lumpkin says he isn't so sure he wants to go to the same school as his brother and play the same position.

"The fact that my brother is at Ohio State is a positive in one sense in that he knows his way around and we can be together," said Lumpkin. "I already know so much

REP REPORT

Keeping Up With COLBY FREEMAN

WE PLAYED SAN ANGELO LAKEVIEW this past Friday, and they were another team with a bunch of talented skill guys. We knew going into the game that there was not a big rivalry from our standpoint, but they really don't like us. They came to our place hyped, and we were coming off a loss. It was a good, close game, which we won, 19-14.

We came back after our Sweetwater loss, and we were very disappointed. We met as a group with our coaches, and then we met as a team without our coaches and we just decided right then and there that the workouts had to pick up and our intensity had to improve.

I really think the loss is going to be good for us. It has really made us intensify our workouts. Our concentration level is so much higher than it had been before the loss.

Right now everybody is trying to stop the option, and they are doing a good job of it. We have to find some more tools to execute against different defenses. Passing is one of them. We are trying to get our passing game working, and protection-wise we have changed some schemes. The protection is a little different, and our line is trying to learn it, and the backs are trying to pick up on some stuff, but everything is slowly coming into place.

After each game, I am exhausted. I am going out and getting hit in the shins and in the legs. On one play I got flipped totally upside down after I pitched the ball.

Everything deals with execution. If we can get those people backed off, especially with the rules the way they are, there is no way a secondary can hold a receiver, especially on the high school level. The rules are more in favor of the offense in high school than even the college level, so we should be able to pass the ball.

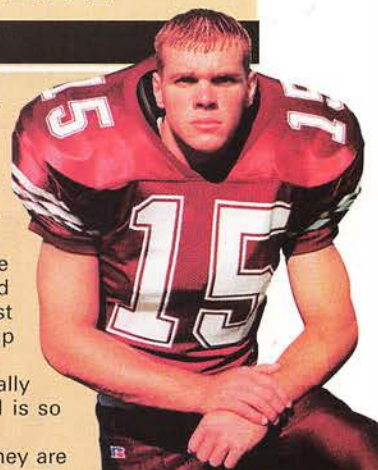
Brett Favre is my favorite pro quarterback. I know this is going to sound bad because I know on that level this has to be this way, but being an option quarterback I hate seeing those quarterbacks slide down. I almost get sick to my stomach. However, I understand that is the only way they can survive up there. It seems Favre is a little less the sliding type. I really don't watch the NFL a whole lot, because I like the college game a lot better.

I contacted Ray Dorr, the quarterbacks coach at Texas A&M this week. I just talked to him about the Louisiana Tech game, which I attended. I called Turner Gill at Nebraska, but didn't get hold of him. A&M pretty much shut down the Louisiana Tech quarterback; however, you can tell that their wide receiver (Troy) Edwards is a heck of an athlete.

I was a little bit surprised how A&M played them and their passing game. Of course, it was rainy. However, when you see Louisiana Tech throw for over 500 yards against Nebraska and then throw for less than 200 against A&M, that's pretty impressive.

We are open this week, and I just hope to do very little. I just want to rest and just stay at home and take it easy. I don't think I am going to see a college game this weekend, unless I go to an area game or something. ■ — **As told to James Hale**

Throughout the 1998 football season, Huskers Illustrated will chronicle the recruiting process of Brownwood quarterback Colby Freeman, one of the top prospects in Texas.



Colby FREEMAN

about Ohio State because he's filled me in on everything from his viewpoint. However, it also puts more pressure on me to go there, and maybe it would

be better for me to go someplace where I can be on my own and develop my own reputation."

Lumpkin says that Ohio State currently is in the lead over Purdue, Tennessee, Nebraska, Pittsburgh and Michigan State.

Josh Tucker (6-5, 240, 4.6) of Moore, Okla., is one of the top five players in the Sooner state after sharing tight end duties with All-American Frank Romero, who is currently a freshman at OU, last season. Tucker can bench 330 pounds and put the shot 55 feet, 7 inches in track. Tucker is leaning toward

Early Birds

These players have given Nebraska verbal non-binding commitments.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	40	High School
Josh Davis	TB	6-0	194	4.4	Loveland, Colo.
Ryon Bingham	DT	6-4	260	5.0	Sandy (Alta), Utah
Rob Blomeier	QB/DB	6-0	194	4.5	Lancaster (Manheim Township), Pa.
Judd Davies	FB	6-1	238	4.7	Omaha (Millard North), Neb.
Taylor Gehman	FS	6-0	190	4.5	Omaha (Northwest), Neb.
Chris Loos	OL	6-3	275	5.4	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.
Phil Peetz	DT	6-2	250	4.9	Elkhorn, Neb.
Trevor Johnson	TE	6-4	220	4.7	Lincoln (Northeast), Neb.
Shaun Coleman	LB/QB	6-4	212	4.5	Aurora (Regis Jesuit), Colo.

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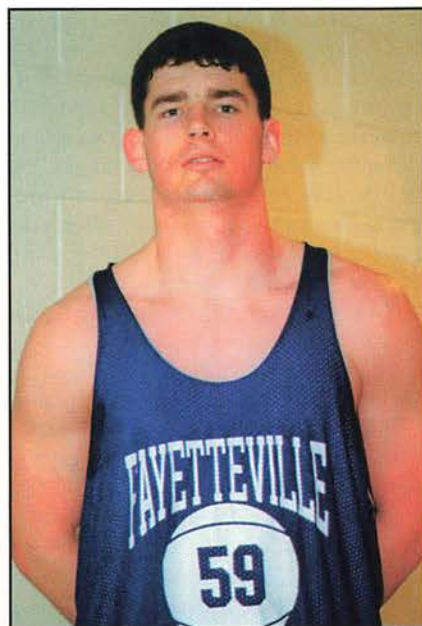
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Oklahoma State, with Nebraska, Kansas State, Ohio State and Colorado in the hunt.

Darin Naatjes (6-6, 230, 4.5) of Inwood (West Lyons), Iowa, is the third straight All-American prepster from tiny Lyons County, following Nebraska rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch and Iowa's Roger Meyer. A first-team all-state selection five times in four different sports, Naatjes plays on both sides of the ball. On defense he intercepted seven passes a year ago, returning four for scores. He also contributed on special teams with his four punt



J. Strain, who was injured much of last year, is a standout in basketball in addition to being a top tight end prospect.

returns for touchdowns, and he caught 12 touchdown passes at tight end.

Naatjes runs an incredible 10.7 100-meters in track and is almost a sure bet to be a top ten pick in the upcoming major league baseball draft. He hit .550 with 12 home runs as a center-fielder and throws a blazing 93-mile per hour fastball on the mound. Naatjes has made it very clear that he wants to play both sports in college.

"Just about every school that has offered me a scholarship has told me I can play both sports in college," said Naatjes. "I really want to go to college, but will listen to pro baseball to see what they have to say. It's going to have to be an incredible offer for me to pass on college."

Nebraska is the slight leader with Arizona, Kansas, Iowa, Stanford, Arizona, Florida State and Iowa State also in the hunt.

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Jessie Walter (6-7, 230, 4.9) of Dubuque (Hempstead), Iowa, is another outstanding tight end who is hearing from colleges all over the country. Walter is leaning toward staying in-state at Iowa or Iowa State but is also planning to visit Nebraska, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

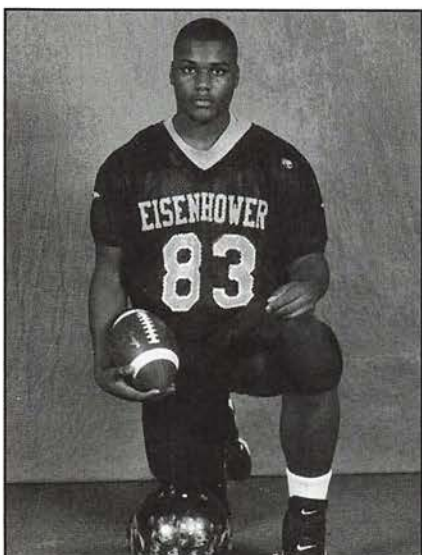
Montell Green (6-5, 229, 4.9) of Saginaw (Buena Vista), Mich., is also drawing national attention. Green caught 60 passes for 300 yards and 9 touchdowns last season. Green is looking at Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska and Ohio State.

In California, Nebraska hopes to get in on the recruitment of **Justin Lezasseur** (6-6, 250, 4.7) of Antioch. Lezasseur plays both tight end and defensive end and is currently looking at Washington, California, Stanford, Arizona State, Northwestern and Nebraska.

Out of Texas, **John David Blagg** (6-2, 245, 4.7) of Texarkana (Pleasant Grove) is another combination tight end/defensive end type. Blagg made 150 tackles last season and is looking at Arkansas, Notre Dame, Michigan, Texas A&M and Nebraska.

Jarrod Penright (6-2, 210, 4.40) of Houston (Eisenhower) is an outstanding two-way player who is leaning toward Michigan or Texas A&M with Nebraska, Florida State and OU still in the hunt.

J. Strain (6-4, 230, 4.9) of Fayetteville, Ark., caught 17 passes last season for 229 yards. Arkansas leads after Strain attended the Hogs summer camp over Nebraska, Mississippi, Northwestern and Texas A&M. ■



Jarrod Penright is one of the top tight end prospects in the state of Texas, but he is also dominant as a linebacker and could play at that position in college.

CAMPUS LIFE

As Seen Through The Eyes Of Aaron Wills

AARON WILLS WILL forever remember the moment: 8 a.m. on a Friday — his 21st birthday — and Tom Osborne was on the phone.

"Whenever the head coach calls you at home, it's bad news," the Nebraska rush end said.

What a birthday gift- Osborne informed Wills he had failed a drug test for the third time and would not make the trip to last season's game at Kansas. Osborne, in his final season, eventually kicked Wills off the team for the rest of the year.

"That was a pivotal point of my life right there," he said. "If I didn't make the choice that day to give my life up to the Lord, I promise you I wouldn't be playing football today."

Wills, a 6-foot-2, 240-pound junior, has been playing a lot of football on Saturdays. His workload has increased due to the nagging groin injury that has slowed Mike Rucker.

Last season, Wills' life was coming apart at the seams.

The unraveling intensified in a 49-21 victory at Baylor in mid-October. Wills incurred 25 yards in penalties on a punt. First he was called for holding, then, as the ball bounced on the turf, Wills clocked somebody and was flagged for unnecessary roughness. The Bears scored on the next play.

Nebraska defensive coordinator Charlie McBride gave Wills an earful on the sideline. The team returned to Lincoln about midnight, and by 2 a.m., Wills, still feeling depressed, broke out a leftover stash of marijuana — he never used anything else, he said — and left the world for a while.

Three days later, Nebraska surprised Wills with a drug test.

Osborne's call brought Wills to his knees. He said he needed a spiritual change. Wills stayed away from his teammates for almost two months. It would have been longer if not for a visit from Grant Wistrom. The former NU All-American stopped by Wills' house near campus and encouraged him to return to the team.

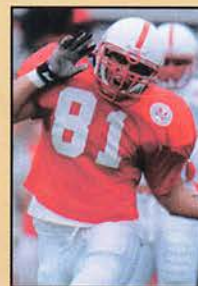
"Grant said, 'You're going to be playing and starting someday. We want you back. I understand what you did wrong, but you have to bounce back from this,'" Wills recalls.

Wills' downward spiral actually began in high school.

"In high school, I really didn't care about anything," Wills said. "I was looking at what everybody else was doing, and everybody else was smoking weed and drinking and partying and having sex. I was like, 'OK, they can do it, why can't I?'"

Now, Wills said, he feels humbled by the success he's having.

"I took football for granted for so long," he said. "I took my talent for granted. I took life for granted. People die because of the things I used to do. ■ — As told to Steve Sipple



Aaron WILLS

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Welcome Back DeAngelo

Nearly 21 months after seeing action, Nebraska's No. 1 I-Back returned just in time to give the offense the kick start it needed



**Mike
BABCOCK**

NEAR THE END of his post-game interview, DeAngelo Evans asked for a towel to wipe the sweat from his brow. The heat from the television lights was intense.

And he had just come from the locker room.

"All right, proceed," he said when he was finished.

He laughed, and those in the room laughed with him.

It was good to see Evans being interviewed after a game. The last time was Dec. 7, 1996, after he had rushed for 130 yards and three touchdowns in a 37-27 upset loss against Texas.

He was hurting even then from the pelvic-related injury that would sideline him for the next year and a half. And then, just when it appeared he was back, he suffered a knee injury.

So it had been about 21 months since he last played in a game.

"I was nervous. Oh yes, I was real nervous," he said. "You're going to be nervous. That's only human. I would only be human to be nervous. But as the game went on, I felt like my old self."

As the game went on? Try his fourth carry, which he took 60 yards for the first of his three touchdowns in Nebraska's overwhelming 55-7 victory against No. 9 Washington.

Near the end of the run, with a defender in reach, he had a decision to make.

"I was thinking, 'should I cut back, go against the grain on him?' But I was only 10 yards from the goal line, so by the time I would have made a decision, I would have been in the end zone," Evans said. "I was happy I could get that done."

Coach Frank Solich was happy about it, too.

"I was really happy for DeAngelo," he said. "I think our whole coaching staff and whole team was really delighted to see DeAngelo play, and play so well because it's been such a struggle for him to get on the field. He had to really come through an awful lot for about the last year and a half."

"He's been able to do that. He's kept his mind where it needed to be, his focus where it needed to be. And eventually, it has paid off for him. I think he got off to a good start."

"I think he's just getting himself into playing shape, so he'll continue to improve."

The same was true of sophomore quarterback Bobby Newcombe, who returned after missing the last two games because of a knee injury suffered in the opener against Louisiana Tech.

Newcombe rushed for 79 yards (second to Evans' game-high 146) on 14 carries and completed 5-of-8 passes for 84 yards against Washington. He also scored three touchdowns.

Newcombe wore a brace to protect his left knee, and he admitted it "felt a little heavy at first." He said that after a while, however, "the adrenaline was flowing so much, I didn't even notice it."

Being sidelined for two games was a learning experience for Newcombe.

"The first week was kind of difficult," he said.

"Definitely the first game was kind of difficult as well, sitting down there, watching the game, not being able to do anything for the team except telling them 'good job' when they come off the field. The second game, you kind of get used to it a little."

"But you can't get used to earning a starting job and then watching for two games. That's very hard, but I think it made me stronger as an individual and also made me a better leader. I'm able to understand what players go through when they get injured and what it's like to have to watch

others play."

With Newcombe and Evans setting a fast pace, Nebraska rushed for a season-high 434 yards, averaging a healthy 6.4 yards per attempt. Evans averaged nearly twice that on his 13 carries.

"It was kind of a fairy tale thing," Evans said. "I thought everything worked out well."

With the suspense drained from the game early — Evans went over 100 yards rushing on his seventh carry, early in the second quarter — the reserves got a good share of the remaining carries.

By game's end, 14 Cornhuskers had run the ball at least once.

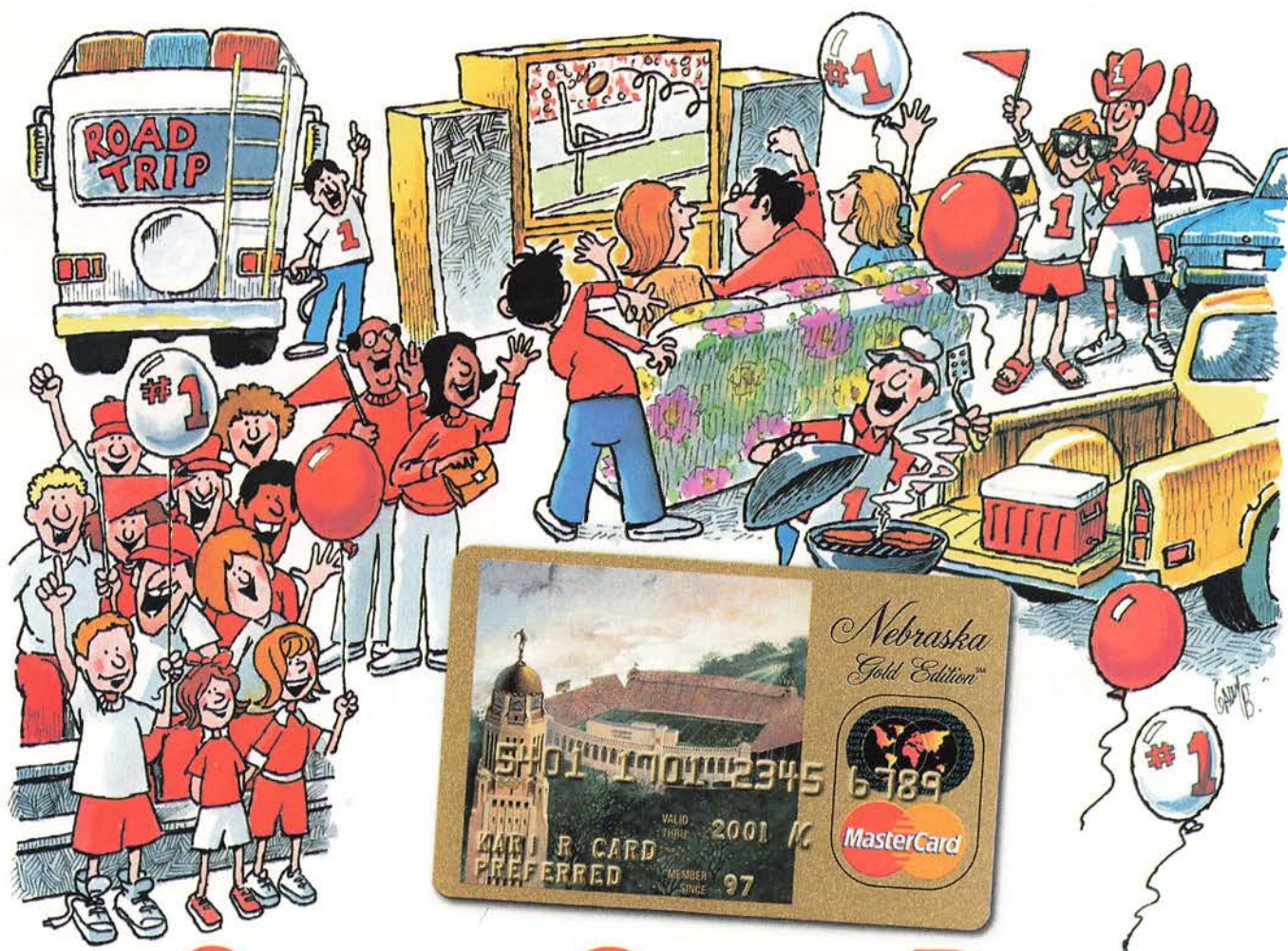
"I was just thankful for mainly the way our team played, more than my being back and Bobby being back," Evans said. "I think we made a statement as a team."

"I don't want to make too much out of this one game," he said. "We got the victory. We'll feel good about it until Monday, (and then) get ready for Oklahoma State." ■



Prior to Saturday's 55-7 victory over Washington, the only action DeAngelo Evans had seen over the last year and a half was on the practice field.

Scott Bruhn



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